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Testifying the Gospel of the Grace of God.*

Whenever St. Paul had occasion to speak of his work in the Christian ministry, his thoughts dwelt on one subject: "The Gospel of the grace of God." At a conference at Miletus he characterized his ministry thus: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20, 24. On the present occasion we cannot, and we would not, speak on any other subject. Let us single out this particular point: The great need, the one great need, of the Church is "the Gospel of the grace of God."

The Church owes its existence to the Gospel of the grace of God. And it could not exist for one moment without it. Offering the sinner the forgiveness of sins gained by Christ, the Gospel produces and preserves the saving faith, and by magnifying this wondrous love of God, it produces the Christian life. In the words of Dr. Pieper (*Chr. Dog.*, II, p. 13): "The *gratuitus favor Dei propter Christum*, brought to us in the Gospel, is the immovable heaven of grace spread out over the Church, under which the Christians live and work by faith. Gazing upon this heaven of grace, faith comes into being, is preserved, and becomes a 'living, energetic, active, mighty thing' (Luther, XIV, 99)." We Christians owe everything to the grace of God. It is the one source and the rich source of all comfort and joy. When the sinner, when the Christian, realizes his utter unworthiness and absolute helplessness, the Gospel speaketh in this wise: "By grace are ye saved, . . . not of yourselves, . . . not of works," Eph. 2, 8 f. — *sola gratia*. When we anxiously inquire by what right the just God receives the sinner into His favor, the Gospel speaketh in this wise:

* The following address, delivered October 25, 1935, in the chapel of Concordia Seminary on the occasion of Dr. L. Fuerbringer's jubilee, is offered here in place of the customary Foreword to the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY. The sole business of our periodical is to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. — *Ed. Note.*

Ye are "justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," Rom. 3, 24 — *favor Dei propter Christum.* And to him who, happy in the joy of salvation, has but one more wish, the eager desire to have his fellow-men share in his bliss, the Gospel speaketh in this wise: "Preach the Gospel to every creature," Mark 16, 15. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," Titus 2, 11 — *gratia universalis.* The grace of God in Christ is everything to the Church. And so much does she make of the truth that her righteousness is Christ that it has become her very name. "This is the name wherewith she shall be called: The Lord Our Righteousness," Jer. 33, 16. That means, as a theologian who is still among us, near and dear to us, points out: "The Church of God is set before us as a monument of joy, and the name that she bears, the mark by which she is known, is the name of her Savior, *Jehovah Zidkenu,* the Lord Our Righteousness." (*Lehre und Wehre,* 74, p. 145.) The Gospel of the grace of God is the Church's all. In it she lives and moves and has her being.

The Gospel supplies every want of the Church and can remedy every evil that afflicts her. For instance, the Church is groaning under the divisions which the errorists have caused in the visible Church. The heart of every Christian is set on the removal of this curse. And the only power that can heal the hurt is the Gospel of the grace of God. Says Luther (V, 1170), and after him the Formula of Concord (*Trigl.,* p. 917): "If this only article remains pure on the battle-field, the Christian Church also remains pure and in goodly harmony and without any sects; but if it does not remain pure, it is not possible that any error or fanatical spirit can be resisted." The reason is this: *"Es kann keine Ketzerei die Gnade Gottes leiden."* (Luther, III, 1692.) The errorist, at heart, hates the article that man is saved, converted, justified, by grace alone. (Cp. Walther, *Law and Gospel,* p. 163.) And, conversely, the heart that lives in the grace of God *kann keine Ketzerei leiden.* It cannot bear *any* false teaching. For, since the article of the grace of God is the heart and center of the entire Scriptures, any denial of any Scripture-teaching will in the end vitiate this article. And that the Christian cannot stand. — How shall the disrupted Church be reunited? Let the Gospel of grace rule in theology and rule in the hearts; then men will not only be able to detect the particular error, but will also be ready and determined to cast it out of their hearts, out of theology, out of the Church.

The Church's one great need is the Gospel of the grace of God, and so, in the second place, she needs a ministry which is able and willing to testify and teach it. And the Gospel itself supplies this need. No man becomes a minister of the Gospel of himself. It is not an easy matter to testify and teach the Gospel of grace. That arouses

the opposition and enmity of well-nigh the whole world. The whole Pelagian world is up in arms against it. The Pelagian world of Paul's days was determined to silence this testimony. Paul could testify the Gospel of grace only at the cost of bonds and affliction and at the daily risk of his life. Moreover, it went against his own Pelagian flesh and blood. It needed the power of God to turn the Pelagian Pharisee Paul into a minister of the Gospel of grace. It was the power of God which made the Semi-Pelagian, Catholic Luther a preacher of the righteousness which is of faith, by grace. And this compelling, gently compelling, force inheres in the Gospel itself. It was the Gospel which won the heart of Paul and thereby at once enlisted his mind and tongue and pen in its service. The joy of salvation which it brought to him must be brought to others. "Salvation unto us has come by God's free grace and favor" — we cannot keep that song locked up in our hearts. The earth must be filled with the psalm of *sola gratia, gratia universalis.* The Gospel of grace produces its own heralds. The pastors who had met there in Miletus were facing the same difficulties and struggles that Paul had encountered, and he tells them: "I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up," Acts 20, 32.

The Gospel produces the men the Church needs, and the Church needs men who live for the Gospel and are ready to die for it. Such men, dedicated to the Gospel, live in the Gospel. It is their daily meditation. They pray, says Luther, that "the Holy Ghost may so fill their hearts with it that they busy themselves with it all the day long, that they retire with these words at night and rise with them in the morning." (XI, 1103.) Further, "a preacher of the right sort studies and teaches this article *above all* and at all times; for on this article depends the true knowledge of God and our salvation." (VIII, 798.) A preacher of the right sort knows only one thing. Paul "determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," 1 Cor. 2, 2. Whether he preached in the market-place, or wrote epistles to the churches, or trained men for the ministry, or supervised their later work, his one interest lay in the Gospel of grace. Such a minister has no time to waste on anything that does not very positively serve the Gospel of grace. Other studies may gain him the plaudits of the learned, other activities arouse the admiration and enthusiastic support of the secularistic and legal-minded masses. But none of these things move him. Finally, he jealously guards the purity of the Gospel of grace as the one treasure of the Church, the only hope of the sinner. He would rather cut off his right hand than write down one word in support of the teaching that there is something in man, some activity, some disposition, that merits, or accounts for, the sinner's conversion. He would rather have his tongue paralyzed than have it say that God would not have all men to be saved. He will not

commit the crime of closing the door of heaven to any sinner and of robbing the troubled believer of his needed comfort. What does the Church need? Her prayer is: Lord, give us men who testify the Gospel, the full and pure Gospel.

The Church needs to have the Gospel of grace preached to her, preached, in the third place, in the Lutheran way. There are not different kinds of Gospel — the Catholic gospel, the Reformed gospel, the Modernist gospel, the Lutheran gospel. There is but one Gospel-salvation because of Christ, salvation by grace alone, salvation for all. And this Gospel is preached by the Lutheran Church in all its fulness and purity. She has maintained the article of grace in all its parts and aspects, in all its bearings and relations. Her enemies bear witness to that effect. For on that account they are her enemies. They blame her just for this. The liberal bodies hate the Lutheran Church for teaching the *gratia Dei propter Christum.* The Catholic and Arminian churches blame her for teaching the *sola gratia.* The Calvinistic churches call her to account for teaching the *gratia universalis.* This is the verdict of the adversaries. "This blessed doctrine [of the righteousness of faith in Christ], the precious holy Gospel, they call Lutheran." (Apology. *Trigl.,* p. 327.) Yes, whatever belongs to the Biblical doctrine of saving grace the Lutheran Church teaches. She will not relinquish one iota of it. "Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and whatever will not abide, should sink to ruin." (Smalc. Art. *Trigl.,* p. 461.) She cannot do otherwise. She will not go against God's eternal truth. She solemnly declares: "We have said in the Confession that the remission of sins is received freely for Christ's sake, through faith. If this is not the very voice of the Gospel, if it is not the judgment of the eternal Father, which Thou who art in the bosom of the Father hast revealed to the world, we are justly blamed. But Thy death is a witness, Thy resurrection is a witness, the Holy Ghost is a witness, Thy entire Church is a witness that it is truly the judgment of the Gospel that we obtain remission of sins, not on account of our merits, but on account of Thee, through faith." (Apology. *Trigl.,* p. 423.)

The one need of the Church is the Gospel of grace, and the more fully this Gospel is preached, the better her need is supplied. If the voice of the Lutheran Church were hushed, that is to say, if the Gospel of grace were no longer preached in its fulness and purity, the Church would suffer great spiritual loss. Amplifying this, Dr. Krauth declared: "As our Church has been needed in the past, so she is needed in the present. She is needed not only for her motherhood to her own children, but for the great wants of Christendom and of the world. She is needed as a witness to that doctrine which is conceded in terms by the whole Protestant world, but which is invaded primarily or by necessary inference by every system which is at war with ours —

the doctrine of justification by faith. Inadequate views of the person and work of Christ; false views of election and reprobation; of the means of grace; of the Word and Sacraments; of the mode and subject of Baptism; of the nature of the validity and efficacy of the ministry — all are in conflict, covertly it may be, but really, with the true doctrine of justification by faith. Romanism and Ritualism directly assail it; Rationalism destroys it; Fanaticism, sometimes with an affectation of zealotry for it, confounds justification by faith with justification by sensation and leads the patient to rest, not on the old, eternal promise, but on a new personal observation. No Church holds the doctrine of justification by faith in that consistent integrity and harmonious relation within itself and with all other doctrines in which it is held and confessed in the Lutheran Church." (*The Lutheran Diet,* 1877, p. 48.)

Finally. One of the instrumentalities through which the Lutheran Church fulfils her God-given mission is our Concordia Seminary together with its sister seminaries throughout the world. In view of the nature of the present celebration a few remarks on this point will not be out of place. Concordia Seminary has one single aim — to fit men for the ministry of the Gospel of grace, to graduate men who are able and willing to preach it in its purity and fulness. Its first president, Dr. Walther, inculcated this from first to last. "The weakest graduate, if only he has grasped the doctrine that the grace of God in Christ Jesus has appeared for all men, to be received freely, by faith, can preach to men in such a way that they are assured of their salvation, and that is worth more than all the wisdom and all the possessions and treasures of the world. What is all erudition, as necessary as it is in its place, compared with the wisdom of God which is set forth when but the simple passage is explained 'God so loved the world,' etc.? Hearing this, all poor sinners rejoice, all the holy angels are filled with wonder, and the whole world should sink upon its knees and sing Gloria and Hallelujah. If our young preachers preach this, they are the men who can start a reformation in our country, as indeed in this way a small beginning has already been made." (*Proc. Syn. Conf.,* 1872, p. 28.) He told his students: "If you preach the Gospel abundantly, . . . your people will say: 'Our minister has given us what we could not get anywhere else. He is a true Lutheran minister and pours out a great treasure for us every Sunday.'" (*Law and Gospel,* p. 408.) And we know with what burning words he adjured the Seminary, at the dedication in 1883, to remain true to its charter. (Cf. *Lutheraner,* 79, p. 372.) The second president, Dr. Pieper, ever reminded the Seminary of its high calling. In an essay read before the General Body in 1926 he said: "The new Seminary buildings here in St. Louis are placed in the service of the Christian doctrine of grace. If they did not serve that purpose,

they would be nothing but a magnificent idol-temple." He closed his essay with the prayer: "Dear Savior Jesus Christ, graciously grant us that we may never betray the alone-saving Christian doctrine of grace, but remain faithful confessors of it for the honor of Thy holy name and the salvation of man! Amen." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 72, pp. 266. 329.) By the grace of God, Concordia Seminary to-day knows only one thing. The Biblical doctrine of the grace of God in Christ shapes all the courses in its curriculum. It forms the subject of the final examinations. Addressing the graduating class of 1933, the president said: "We feel sure that you have a clear perception of these two central truths of our Church, of the formal principle [the sole authority of Scripture] and of the material principle [justification by faith, salvation by grace], and that you confess both by mouth and heart as your faith; otherwise we could not with a good conscience permit you to enter the ministry." (Conc. Theol. Monthly, IV, 562). A seminary of this character, in so far as it accomplishes its high aim, measures up fully to the needs of the Church.

And now for the matter at hand. Realizing the need of the Church and of the world, we commemorate with gratitude and joy the fifty years of Dr. Fuerbringer's work in the ministry of the Gospel of grace. In all these years, in the various positions into which God placed him, as pastor of a Christian congregation, as teacher at Concordia Seminary since 1893 and its president since 1931, as editor of the *Lutheraner*, and as President of the Synodical Conference, making full use of the manifold opportunities these positions offered, he has been testifying with a loud and sweet voice the Gospel of the grace of God; he has been giving all that is in him to supply the one great need of the Church. We thank God for the rich blessings this ministration has brought to us and countless others. And we pray God that the teaching and the example of the jubilarian may inspire many with the mind of the apostle: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." Th. Engelder.

Der Pietismus.

(Fortsetzung.)

In den „Magdeburger Zenturien", dem monumentalen Geschichtswerk der Reformationszeit, abgeschlossen im Jahre 1574, schrieb Flacius: „Anstatt *eines* Papstes springen ihrer unzählige hervor, welche Recht umwechseln und aus Gerichts- in Kirchensachen treten, in ihren Schranken nicht bleiben und den Gemeinden die Glaubensformeln mit Schwert, Blitz und Donner aufdringen. Dazu braucht man einen Haufen Vor-

wand. Die Obrigkeit sei custos utriusque tabulae, müsse den Streit schlichten, die unruhigen Köpfe vertreiben." Das Prinzip, daß das Amt des Worts der Kirche gehört, daß daher bei Berufung, bzw. Versetzung der Prediger sowie bei Ausübung der Kirchenzucht die Gemeinde vertreten sein muß, dies Prinzip, das in der „Wittenbergischen Reformation", 1545, noch gewahrt wurde, war also 1574 zum großen Teil aufgegeben. Das Kirchenregiment fiel in die Hände der Fürsten. Ein Hauptzeuge dafür ist David Chyträus, † 1600, seit 1551 Professor an der Universität Rostock, aber besonders tätig in der Ausbildung der kirchlichen Ordnung in Österreich, der Steiermark und in Mecklenburg; in letzterem Lande wurde er 1571 Vorsitzender des neugeordneten Konsistoriums und hielt zur Eröffnung desselben eine gewaltige Rede *De Iudiciis Ecclesiasticis.* Chyträus sagt: „Die politici haben auf Lutheri Unterricht desto begieriger das Evangelium angenommen, daß sie das Joch der Bischöfe abwerfen und die Kirchengüter nehmen dürfen. Nun wollen sie aber jetzt nicht mehr auf die Kirchendiener sehen und über alle urteilen. Also muß nun die Kirche nach dem Anspruch der Höfe mehr als nach dem Wort Gottes regiert werden."

Zu diesem Wandel hatte viel beigetragen der Augsburgische Religionsfriede vom Jahr 1555, in dem das auf dem ersten Reichstag zu Speyer, 1526, provisorisch angenommene Prinzip Cuius regio, eius religio als zu Recht bestehend anerkannt wurde. Und teils aus Unterwürfigkeit, teils gewiß auch aus Bequemlichkeit ließ man die Fürsten in der Kirche wirtschaften. Daß man sich dabei nicht wohl fühlte, geht aus den vielen verschiedenen Rechtfertigungsgründen hervor, die man ins Feld führte, dieses Fürstenregiment zu verteidigen, worauf schon die „Magdeburger Zenturien" hinweisen; man nannte die Fürsten custodes non solum secundae tabulae, sed etiam primae, dann wieder praecipua membra ecclesiae; und schließlich machte man sich's bequem und behauptete, das ius episcopale sei von den Bischöfen auf die Fürsten übergegangen.[1]) Der Protest gegen diese Entwicklung des Kirchenregiments stirbt nie ganz aus, aber es sind nur einzelne Stimmen.

Als sich jedoch die Folgen zeigten, erhoben sich auch Klagen, erst dann und wann, dann häufiger, bis schließlich, gegen Anfang des Dreißigjährigen Krieges, die Klagen allgemein wurden; Zustände in der Kirche waren geradezu bedenklich geworden. Hauptinhalt der Klagen ist immer dieser: Das Regiment in der Kirche liegt nicht in Händen der Prediger (daß auch der Zuhörer sich dabei beteiligen sollte, hatte man ziemlich allgemein vergessen), sondern nur in den Händen der Obrigkeit. Zwar regierten die Prediger noch durch Konsistorien, aber diese hatten alle Amtsbefugnisse verloren; in den Reichsstädten gab es Ministerien, bestehend aus den Predigern der Stadt und einigen Deputierten des

1) Aus Richter, Geschichte der evangelischen Kirchenverfassung in Deutschland, und Rudelbach, Staatskirchentum und Religionsfreiheit; zitiert von Schmid, Geschichte des Pietismus, S. 5.

Senats, an ihrer Spitze der Senior des Ministeriums; aber diese hatten nur Antragsrecht.[2] Es seien noch etliche Zitate als Beleg gestattet.

Joh. Matthäus Meyfart, † 1642, verfaßte 1633 eine Abhandlung *De Disciplina Ecclesiastica*, wofür er bei der Regierung verklagt wurde und zum Widerruf gezwungen werden sollte, als er einem Beruf nach Erfurt (er war Professor und Rektor zu Koburg) folgte. Neben andern Reformen verlangte er: „Weil auch die Kirchenschlüssel ganz nicht zu entbehren, . . . müssen solche aus Höfen, Kammern und Kanzeleien zurückgegeben und der christlichen Gemeinde solche durch den erwählten Rat frei zu gebrauchen gelassen werden.[3]

Joh. Valentin Andreä, † 1654, Superintendent in Kalw, dann Hofprediger in Stuttgart, hat sich hoch um die Kirche seiner Zeit verdient gemacht durch seine unermüdliche Sorge, die Zustände unter dem durch den Krieg ganz unbeschreiblich verwilderten Volke zu heben. Er wurde in seiner reformatorischen Tätigkeit ganz besonders durch das mächtige Staatskirchentum gehemmt. Er klagt vor allem über die Cäsareopapie, den Apap, wie er sie nennt, das umgekehrte Papsttum. So schreibt er 1646: „Eo audacius progressi sunt nostri Apapii, ut statuerent, in principis manu tanquam episcopi esse ecclesiastica munia per politicos perficere, ecclesiae vero administrationem et iura tanquam arbitraria et beneficio concessa tota tollere.“[4] Ein andermal schreibt er in einer Vorrede: „Nicht anders ist es mit der durch das teure Werkzeug D. M. Luthers vollbrachten Reformation gegangen, die allerdings dem antichristischen Reich einen unaussprechlichen Stoß und Abbruch beibrachte. Es hat aber der leidige Satan nicht lange gefeiert, sondern das abgeworfene Joch bald wieder anderwärts aufgelegt und seinen Esel umgürtet, indem er gesehen, daß ein großer Teil ihnen das Evangelium zu weltlichem Einkommen, Ehren, Freiheit und völliger Lizenz wisse zunutz zu machen, der Kirchen entwendetes und nunmehr wieder vindiziertes peculium, als ihnen hiedurch verfallen, anfalle, den wieder befreiten Bannschlüssel zurücklege und mit Füßen trete, den Kirchendienst gänzlich weltlicher Diskretion unterwerfe, die Polizei nicht aus Gewissen, sondern Interesse gründe, die Schulen mit Vanität erfülle und insgemein aller Dissolution den Zaum völlig schießen lasse, welches ihnen dann so viel eingetragen, daß er sich nicht allein in kurzem seines Leides über den geistlichen Antichrist getröstet, sondern auch einen neuen weltlichen Antichrist mit Freuden gesehen und anstatt papae Caesaris mit Caesaro-papa ebenso großen Schaden in geistlichen und weltlichen Ständen der Kirche Gottes zugefügt.“[5] J. Müller, Senior in Hamburg, schreibt: „Olim in papatu florebat *παποκαισαρία*, dum pediculosi monachi statum politicum pedibus conculcabant. Hodie autem inverso ordine ecclesiam corrumpit *καισαροπαπία*, dum quidam politici absolutum in ministros

2) Tholuck, Das kirchliche Leben des 17. Jahrhunderts, I. Abt., S. 3.
3) Schmid, l. c., S. 7. 4) Tholuck, l. c., S. 8. 5) Schmid, l. c., S. 8.

ecclesiae imo in ipsam ecclesiam affectant et usurpant dominatum. Utinam Deus excitaret aliquem Constantinum et Carolum Magnum, sub cuius directione et patrocinio ecclesia pressa possit reviviscere!“[6])

Auf allen Seiten wiederholt sich Luthers Vorwurf gegen die Fürsten: „Sub papa miscuit ecclesiam politiae; nostro tempore vult miscere politiam ecclesiae.“ Herzog Friedrich von Württemberg entfernt ohne Rücksicht auf die geistliche Behörde die ihm mißliebigen Geistlichen, die ihm die Wahrheit sagen, von ihren Stellen. Johann Albrecht II. von Mecklenburg schafft den Exorzismus ab ohne Zuziehung der Geistlichen. Die Mecklenburger Stände bringen das gravamen vor, daß ihnen Pfarrer ohne Präsentation aufgezwungen werden. Die Äbtissin Anna Sophia in Quedlinburg besetzt die geistlichen Stellen, ohne irgend auf Widerspruch von Rat und Gemeinde zu achten. Nik. Hunnius, Superintendent in Lübeck, protestiert gegen die ehrenvolle Beerdigung eines Calvinisten und bekommt von seinem Senat eine Zuschrift, worin dieser das summum et universale ius regiminis ecclesiastici mit Ausschließung des Ministeriums in Anspruch nimmt.

Mag man also auch zugeben, daß, außer im Prinzip, diese Einmischung der Fürsten in das Amt der Kirche nicht so unheilvoll für die Kirche geworden wäre, wenn alle Fürsten außerordentlich gute und weise Leute gewesen wären, so ist doch geschichtliche Tatsache, daß die allermeisten Fürsten ganz anders geartet waren. Was konnte man auch von Fürsten erwarten, die bei Politikern wie Heinrich VIII., Franz I. und Karl V. in die Schule gegangen waren?

Welches waren denn die unheilvollen Folgen dieses Cäsareopapismus? Sie zeigten sich erstlich im Ministerium. Auf eins ist schon früher hingewiesen worden, als von dem „toten Orthodoxismus“ die Rede war (VI, S. 500): es wurden den Gemeinden aus persönlichen und politischen Rücksichten oft ungeistliche und heuchlerische Leute zu Hirten gesetzt. Solche hat es gewiß nicht viele gegeben; sonst hätte es in der Kirche noch viel schlimmer gestanden.

Zahlreicher war wohl eine andere Klasse von Predigern. Der schon früher zitierte Pastor in Rostock, Großgebauer, schreibt: Der Diener des Worts will heutzutage nur Prediger sein; die Heilige Schrift aber nennt ihn Haushalter über Gottes Geheimnisse und Hirten; indem sie ihn Haushalter nennt, zeigt sie damit an, daß er nicht müsse allen allerlei geben, sondern denen es gebührt und welche würdig sind, daß man es ihnen reiche. Nun gibt's aber viele in der Kirche, sagt er, die solche Allein-Prediger sind. „Der Allein-Prediger sagt viel. Der Haushalter saget und tut's. Der Allein-Prediger ist mehrenteils ein tönendes Erz und eine klingende Schelle, ob er gleich mit Engels- und mit Menschenzunge redete. Der Haushalter gibt dem gepredigten Wort Zeugnis, und ehe er die Geheimnisse des Reiches Gottes sollte bei diesem

6) Tholuck, l. c., S. 11.

und jenem, er sei, wer er sei, wissentlich wider den Willen Gottes verwalten, so lässet er sich lieber töten. . . . Der Allein-Prediger hält zierlich Predigen für seinen Ruhm, und wenn er gepredigt, spricht er, er habe nunmehr seine Arbeit getan. Aber der Haushalter hält die Haushaltung für seine rechte Arbeit, und wenn er gepredigt, spricht er, er habe nur die halbe Arbeit getan." Die Kinder sollen nicht nur getauft werden, sondern in späteren Jahren auch die Bedeutung der Taufhandlung lernen. Die Konfirmation wird empfohlen. Nicht nur soll das heilige Abendmahl gefeiert werden; die Gemeindeglieder werden zu wenig über die Bedeutung dieses Sakraments unterrichtet.

Ferner soll der Prediger nach der Schrift ein Hirte sein. „Als solcher hat er auf die befohlene Herde zu sehen, daß sie nicht allein mit gesunder Weide versorgt werde, sondern auch daß die Wölfe nicht einbrechen, daß die räudigen Schafe die gesunden nicht anstecken, sondern abgesondert werden; daß die Verirrten wiedergebracht, die Wiedergebrachten gestärkt und erhalten werden; daß die Schafe sich mit dem Hirtenstabe regieren und sich ein- und ausführen lassen." „Aber die Hirten wollen nicht Hirten, sondern Lehrer sein. Daher nennen sie sich gerne doctores, Lehrer. Daher treiben sie auf der Kanzel Kontroversien und wollen gern schier alle professores sein. So gar haben sie des Hirtenamts vergessen. Nicht sage ich, daß ein Hirte nicht sollte zugleich lehren, sondern das ist die Meinung: ein Hirte ist nicht eben das, was ein Lehrer ist, sondern unterschieden. Ein Hirte predigt, aber er ist nicht ein Allein-Prediger. Er ist wohl mehr. Er ist ein Regierer der Gemeinde. Er gibt Achtung auf das geistliche Wachstum eines jeglichen. Ein Hirte gibt nicht einerlei Speise allen Schafen. Er sieht zu, ob ihnen die sakramentliche Speise auch diene. Ein Hirte schließt aus der Gemeinde die Aussätzigen, damit die ganze Herde nicht verderbet werde. Ein Hirte nennt seine Schäflein alle mit Namen. Ein Hirte gibt Achtung, wie sich ein jegliches unter den Schäflein insonderheit aus dem vorgetragenen Wort bessere; und wenn er merkt, daß keine Früchte folgen, so forscht er nach der Ursache. Ein Hirte fordert den Gehorsam von seinen Schafen; und wenn sie seinem Wort nicht nachkommen wollen, sagt er es der Herde, daß dieser und jener kein Schäflein ist noch in den Schafstall gehöre. Solange nun dieses Lehr- und Hirtenamt in unsern Kirchen konfundiert wird, so lange ist das Kirchenregiment, Furcht, Zucht, Eifer, Scheu, Gehorsam, Aufmerken nichts und verloren und kann durch das viele Predigen und Bücherschreiben allein nimmermehr erhalten werden."

Dies ist also die weitere Klage: Neben den offenbar untüchtigen und gewissenlosen Predigern gab es solche, die zwar fähig und tüchtig waren und ihre Pflicht tun wollten, tatsächlich aber ihre Pflicht nicht taten; sie predigten nur die reine Lehre von der Kanzel. Die Privatseelsorge wurde vernachlässigt. Sie predigten zwar das Wort, und zwar beides, Rechtfertigung und Heiligung; aber sie predigten es nur von der

Kanzel; es fehlte die Anwendung des Worts auf den einzelnen Zuhörer, der Privatunterricht. Die Theorie war korrekt, aber die Praxis hinkte hinterdrein. Dem einzelnen Christen wurde nicht vorgehalten, was Gott von ihm in seinem Stande und unter seinen besonderen Verhältnissen verlangte; wenn er fehlging, folgte keine brüderliche Ermahnung und keine öffentliche Kirchenzucht. Die Pastoren predigten ihren Gemeinden das Wort, sahen aber nicht darauf, daß man dem Wort gemäß lebte.

Wie viele unter dem Ministerium solche Allein-Prediger waren, läßt sich natürlich nicht entscheiden. Wenn man Großgebauer liest, bekommt man den Eindruck, als ob die große Mehrzahl dieser Art gewesen wäre. Das war aber jedenfalls nicht so; sonst hätte es in der Kirche nicht so viel Leben und Tätigkeit gegeben, wie man findet, wenn man die Geschichte der Kirche nach dem Kriege ohne Vorurteil liest und sie nicht mit Pietistenaugen ansieht. Auf der andern Seite darf man gewiß nicht behaupten, daß solche Prediger, wie Großgebauer sie beschreibt, seltene Ausnahmen waren, daß darum das Ministerium gar nicht verantwortlich war für Zustände unter dem Volk, wie Spener sie in seinen *Pia Desideria* beschreibt. Das hieße klare Tatsachen leugnen. Es gab gute Pastoren; ja, diese waren gewiß noch in der Mehrzahl, sonst hätte Spener nach dem Krieg kaum noch eine Kirche gefunden, in der er seine collegia pietatis hätte einrichten können. Aber es gab auch andere; das geht schon daraus hervor, daß Tholuck, Schmid und andere einzelne Beispiele anführen müssen, zu beweisen, daß Speners und Großgebauers Vorwürfe nicht das ganze Ministerium trafen. Es gab viele gute, gewissenhafte Pastoren, aber auch viele, die meinten, sie hätten ihre volle Pflicht getan, wenn sie am Sonntag eine orthodoxe Predigt gehalten und zur festgesetzten Zeit denen, die kamen, das Sakrament gereicht hatten. Und man kann sich der überzeugung nicht erwehren, daß diejenigen, die das große Wort führten und als die Tonangebenden unter der Klerisei angesehen wurden, in die letztgenannte Klasse gehörten, so daß gar oft wiederholt wird, was Meisner in Wittenberg so ausdrückte: „Man kann sich kaum des Verdachtes des Weigelianismi oder anderer neuer Schwärmereien entschütteln, wenn man die Gottseligkeit mit einem gerechten Eifer treibt und dahin vermahnt, daß doch auch in die übung gebracht werde, was man lehrt."

Woher kam es, daß es solche Allein-Prediger in ziemlicher Anzahl gab? „Tote Orthodoxie", sagt man; einseitiges Dringen auf reine Lehre. Auch Großgebauer erhebt die Anklage. Die angehenden Geistlichen sollen auf den Hohen Schulen besser angeleitet werden, das, was sie lernen, bei ihren Pfarrkindern zur übung der Gottseligkeit anzuwenden. „Weil aber die Studenten auf den Universitäten nichts anderes gehört und gelernt haben als papistische, reformierte, sozinianische und wiedertäuferische Kontroversen, so kann man's ihnen auch nicht verdenken, daß sie das, was sie von der Hohen Schule mitgebracht, aus der Schatzkammer ihres Herzens hervorsuchen und auf der Kanzel fleißig

treiben, dadurch aber die armen Leute weniger als nichts gebessert, sondern gar oft verwirrt und ungewiß werden." „Man hat sich daher leider um nichts bekümmert, als wie nur Gottes Wort lauter und rein gepredigt werde."

Solche Einseitigkeit gab es ohne Zweifel. Das läßt sich leicht erklären, wenn man sich die Zeit vergegenwärtigt, von der wir reden. Die Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts brachte die vielen Religionskontroversen der Reformationszeit, die schließlich zur Annahme der Konkordienformel führten. Wie mußte man sich nach allen Seiten wehren gegen allerlei falsche Lehre, die eindringen wollte! Wie mußte man sich vor allem vor heimlichen, unehrlichen Feinden hüten, die auf die listigste Weise die reine Lehre zu fälschen suchten! Unabläßige Wachsamkeit war nötig, damit die reine Gotteswahrheit, die Luther wieder ans Licht gebracht hatte, nicht aufs neue verloren gehe. Und die erste Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts brachte Georg Calixt und die Synkretisten!

Georg Calixt, † 1656, Professor zu Helmstedt in Braunschweig und vierzig Jahre lang der leitende Geist in der dortigen Universität, ist vor allem bekannt wegen seiner Bestrebungen, alle christlichen Kirchen auf Grund der Schrift und der Bekenntnisse der ersten fünf Jahrhunderte zu vereinigen. Er war natürlich ein Unionist vom reinsten Wasser, und reine Lehre hatte für ihn wenig oder gar keine Bedeutung. Statius Buscher, Pastor in Hannover, nannte ihn Kryptokatholik, Michael Walther in Lüneburg Calvinomixtus. Beide hatten recht; sie hätten noch stärkere Ausdrücke gebrauchen dürfen. Calixt suchte das Gemeinsame in allen Konfessionen, und auf Grund dieser „Fundamentalartikel" wollte er eine Vereinigung zustande bringen. Er nannte sich lutherisch, war aber den Reformierten viel näher; und als er dies bei dem Colloquium Charitativum in Thorn 1645 auch offen zeigte, kam es zum Bruch zwischen ihm und den Leitern der Lutheraner, Calov und Hülsemann, obgleich er ihre letzte Mahnung, doch nicht weiter an den Fundamenten der evangelischen Lehre zu rütteln, mit der Salve beantwortete: wer solches von ihm behaupte, den wolle er für einen ehrvergessenen, verlogenen Diffamaten, Kalumnianten, Ehrendieb und Bösewicht halten, bis er solches beweise. Selbst die Katholiken waren sehr zufrieden mit ihm; sie hatten Ursache dazu. Seinem Einfluß war es zuzuschreiben, daß Helmstedt auf die Frage, „ob eine protestantische Prinzessin, die einen katholischen König zu heiraten gedenke, mit gutem, unverletztem Gewissen die römisch-katholische Kirche annehmen dürfe", das notorische Gutachten gab: „1. daß die römische Kirche im Grunde des Glaubens und der Seligkeit nicht irre, und daß 2. folglich der Übergang vom Protestantismus zum Katholizismus erlaubt sei". Baur, der doch gewiß nicht für strikte Orthodoxie voreingenommen war, urteilte über Calixt: „überall ist es Calixt nur darum zu tun, die Differenzen abzuschwächen, den Kontroversen ihre Spitze zu nehmen, von der Strenge der Gegensätze so viel als möglich nachzulassen oder auch die

Punkte ganz zu übergehen, in welchen das eigentliche Moment des Streits liegt. Es gibt keine Lehre des orthodoxen Systems, welche er in ihrer ganzen Strenge festgehalten hätte."

Calixt wurde eine Macht in der Kirche. Wo immer er und seine Gesinnungsgenossen an Universitäten wirkten, zogen sie Schüler an, was natürlich den betreffenden Fürsten gefiel. Lutherische Universitäten hatten schwer gelitten, teils weil man des ewigen Streits müde war, der natürlich zum größten Teil von den Universitätstheologen geführt wurde, teils — und das ist ein Faktor, der in dieser ganzen Zeit nicht übersehen werden darf — weil die Jesuiten, die es von jeher mit dem ihnen üblichen Scharfblick auf die höheren Erziehungsanstalten abgesehen und sich vielerorts in die Fakultäten eingeschmuggelt und stellenweise ihre eigenen Anstalten gegründet hatten, gerade jetzt eine ganz unheimliche Tätigkeit entwickelten; und diese glatten, öligen Diplomaten lockten andern ihre Studenten weg; die lutherischen Kontroversen gewannen unter ihrer Schilderung kein schöneres Gesicht, und zudem — das mußte ihnen der Neid lassen — standen sie, was Wissen und Lehrtüchtigkeit anlangte, unbestritten auf der Höhe der Zeit. So hatte man auf mancher lutherischen Universität Kopfweh. Im Synkretismus schien manchem Fürsten ein Hoffnungsstern aufzugehen. Calixtinische Theologen wurden gesucht. Brandenburg natürlich voran; Königsberg wurde synkretistisch; der Große Kurfürst, Friedrich Wilhelm, verbot seinen Untertanen, die Wittenberger Universität zu besuchen; eine unionistische Order kostete Paul Gerhardt Amt und Brot. Altdorf, Rinteln, Kiel, Tübingen, Gießen, Rostock, Leipzig teilweise, Straßburg, „Calovs Trost", fielen in Synkretistenhände. Selbst der Kurfürst von Sachsen verbot schließlich alle Streitschriften gegen die Synkretisten; er selbst kaufte alle Kopien von Calovs „Geschichte des Synkretismus" auf. Uhlhorn sagt: „Calixt hat die Theologie milder und friedfertiger gemacht, aber auch weicher und widerstandsloser. Keine theologische Schule hat so viele charakterlose, schwankende und den Fürsten unbedingt gehorsame Pastoren erzogen als die Calixts." Was wir uns für die Zukunft merken wollen!

Hier nur dies: Es drohte der reinen Lehre der Reformation eine neue Gefahr; zu all den andern Feinden der Orthodoxie kam der Synkretismus, ein Feind, der der Kirche ans Leben ging und um so gefährlicher war, als seine Angriffe gewöhnlich maskiert und aus dem Hinterhalt geschahen. Dazu ist notorisch, daß die meisten Fürsten unionistisch gesinnt waren; und diese Fürsten waren seit dem Augsburger Religionsfrieden unbeschränkte Herren der Kirche! Ist es ein Wunder, ja ist es unberechtigt, daß das Hauptaugenmerk lutherischer Theologen auf Bewahrung der reinen Lehre gerichtet ist? Ist es ein Wunder, daß die Theologie der Zeit etwas einseitig zu sein scheint und daß mancher Theolog tatsächlich einseitig wurde? Manche Leute sind überhaupt so angelegt; sie können nur einen Gesichtspunkt zur Zeit sehen und vertreten. Daß dies nicht allgemein war, wollen wir später sehen;

hier ſoll nur Calov angeführt werden, der doch gewiß der bedeutendſte Vorkämpfer der Orthodoxie war. Als Speners *Pia Desideria* erſchienen, ſchrieb Calov dennoch an Spener: „Eure *Desideria* ſind auch die meinigen, und da Eure Kirche von den Frömmigkeitsübungen eine ſolche Frucht hat, wie der Ruf berichtet, ſo nehme ich keinen Anſtand, ſolche examina pietatis auch andern zu empfehlen, wie ich denn auch noch kürzlich mit Anführung des Beiſpiels und Erfolgs Eurer Kirche im öffentlichen Gottesdienſt die Patrone der Kirche zu ihrer Nachahmung ermahnt habe mit dem Wunſche, daß ſie mit Nutzen fortgeſetzt und die hier und da per accidens ſich anſchließenden Mißbräuche abgeſtellt werden."

Nein, der Hauptgrund, warum es Allein-Prediger in größerer Anzahl gab, war ein anderer. Es war derſelbe Grund, der im allergrößten Maße dafür verantwortlich war, daß es in der Kirche zum Teil ſo ſtand, wie Spener es in ſeinen *Pia Desideria* ſchildert: Der weltliche Stand lebt zumeiſt in Sünden und Wolluſten; die noch Eifer für Religion zeigen, tun es vielfach mehr „aus Abſicht eines politiſchen Intereſſes" als aus Liebe zur Wahrheit; der geiſtliche Stand iſt ganz verderbt; es fehlt die Selbſtverleugnung; jeder ſucht das Seine; und der Hausſtand iſt verſunken in Trunkſucht und Prozeßſucht; man erkennt nicht, daß Eigentumsbeſitz auch Pflichten mit ſich bringt; man ſucht Abſolution ohne Buße uſw. Der Hauptgrund iſt wieder das Kirchenregiment. Weil dieſes war, was es war, gab es wenig oder gar keine rechte Kirchenzucht. Und das iſt ein neues Kapitel. Theo. Hoyer.

(Fortſetzung folgt.)

Present-Day Problems of Lutheranism.

As viewed by the Lutheran World Convention.

The Lutheran World Convention devoted the greater part of its sessions to the reading and discussion of reports on important problems confronting the Lutheran Church to-day. Unfortunately, for lack of time, the open discussion was frequently reduced to a minimum, so that it was difficult to ascertain what the majority of the delegates thought about the subjects in question.

The first great problem treated was "Lutheranism and the Religious Crisis of our Time." To us it seemed to be *the* most important topic. Bishop Max von Bonsdorff of Finland opened the session devoted to this question by reading an essay prepared by his Finnish colleague, Archbishop Kaila (who could not attend the convention). Dr. Kaila finds that a religious crisis is always closely connected with a world crisis (*Kulturkampf*) and that both mark a turning-point in the course of an evolution. The materialistic philosophy before the war, with the rise of the socialistic belief in human good-

ness and the evolutionary doctrine, which exerted such a great influence upon modern theology, has proved to be a total failure, because it defied all human reason and common sense and denied the most evident realities of life: man's sin and his helplessness. Since the World War this failure of the "optimistic" conception of the world and humanity has brought about a new turn in philosophy and theology, which tends to go to the other extreme and bears all the earmarks of pessimism and fatalism. The war revealed again the evil instincts of man. Spengler is the spokesman of after-war philosophy, with his fatalistic prophecy of the death of the Western civilization (*"Der Untergang des Abendlandes"*). The so-called "Theology of Crisis" (Barth-Brunner), too, shows up a similar pessimism, stressing as it does the immense abyss which separates creation from its Creator and denying all good in man. This theology again points, as it should, to Christ as the only possible Mediator between God and men and calls all churches back to the theology of the Reformation; but, alas! also to the theology of Calvin with its predestinarian doctrine. Religious life during this crisis is marked by a strong revivalistic movement, which has affected also the Lutheran churches: Methodism and especially the new Oxford Movement. The essayist dwelt especially on the latter and pointed out that this movement lays entirely too much stress on the religious self-activity of man and upon man's part in his own conversion and that of his fellow-men by advocating special religious exercises: "surrender," "sharing," "mutual confession," "guidance." It seems to think that, even though sin has been forgiven by God through Christ Jesus, all is not yet well with the sinner. Dr. Kaila advocates, in the midst of this crisis, a firm reespousal of the Pauline-Lutheran teaching concerning the justification and the conversion of sinners without the slightest cooperation of man. . . . We fully enjoyed this essay. It would have gained in strength if the archbishop had established in unmistakable terms the *clear* distinction between objective and subjective justification. . . . It is to be noted that Bishop von Bonsdorff, who read the paper, later on made the statement that, though in general he shares the views expressed in the essay, he personally thinks that, "since the Oxford movement has brought some new life into many Lutheran churches, we must greet this movement with great sympathy." *"Was wuenschen wir denn mehr? Wir sollten nicht Gegner dieser Bewegung sein aus konfessionellen Gruenden!"* This makes us wonder who really represents the true spirit of the Lutheran Church in Finland, its archbishop or Bishop von Bonsdorff. When we hear that since 1927 the Finnish Church has established communion fellowship with the Anglican Church on the grounds that "no doctrinal differences do exist between them" and that it still desires to maintain this union and even to work for

still closer relationship, we do not doubt that the bulk of this Church has not as yet come to a deep realization of the needs of the Lutheran Church "in the religious crisis of our time."

Bishop Schoeffel of Hamburg was the second important speaker on the program, for the same topic. He offered a very thought-stimulating and substantial essay. The speaker maintained that there *is* a *religious crisis,* but not a crisis of *true* Christianity. Christianity is not a religion, but a revelation of God to men. "Religion" is a human creation, an attempt on the part of man to wipe out the boundary which exists between man and God, between the to-day and the hereafter. Religions bear a national character and cannot be transmitted from one people to another. The all-important question is whether Christianity is a religion or not; if it is, then it is doomed to perish, it can no longer claim to be universal; then Rosenberg is right when he says that Christianity is Oriental and unfit for the Aryan race. But Christianity *is* the assurance that *it is not* a religion. In the course of history, especially in modern times, Christianity has in many instances become "religious" because unfaithful to its true teaching of justification by grace (Catholicism, un-Lutheran "Lutheranism," etc.). Only *true* Lutheranism, which knows and teaches that God reveals Himself as a merciful God and that it is impossible to be saved by human merit, can therefore stand the test; for therein Lutheranism distinguishes itself from "religion." (For this reason true Lutheranism always stands alone and aloof from "religious" circles. Roman Catholicism hates Lutheranism, whereas it is friendly toward all kinds of "religions.") We must courageously uphold this true Lutheranism, and cleanse the Lutheran Church of all "religious" tendencies, that is, of all purely human doctrines and influences. Religions are *always* involved in a crisis; Christianism has been *drawn* into the modern religious crisis because it tended to become "a religion." The religious crisis cannot affect *true* Christianity; it has never experienced a crisis, but a reformation. Lutheranism must clearly set forth the essential difference existing between revelation and "religions"; yea, it must *oppose* revelation to religion. Neither the Old nor the New Testament has anything to do with religion. We must avoid all attempts to force "Christian ethics" upon a nation. We must confess our faith in an absolute revelation of divine authority, our faith in the deity of Christ, the reality of miracles, of resurrection, the divine institutions of the creation, our faith in the miraculous virtue of the Sacraments, "not as symbols of the mystic union between God and men, but as the place where this mystic union becomes a reality." Thus spoke Bishop Schoeffel. May we add that world Lutheranism must translate the *affirmation* of these necessities into *reality,* not content itself with merely stating them, but begin a real *action* toward the

definite cleansing of the Church and the sweeping out of the old leaven. The *Bekenntnisfront* in Germany, to which Bishop Schoeffel belongs, has as yet done nothing at all in the way of discipline of doctrine. It still does suffer in its ranks a host of men to whom Scripture remains the old happy hunting-ground and who seem to know nothing of verbal inspiration and similar fundamental principles of true Lutheranism. Nor did the Lutheran World Convention work for a purging of Lutheran churches; for it listened with tolerance to men of the type of Pasteur Appia, *Inspecteur Ecclésiastique* of Paris, the next speaker on the same topic. M. Appia is hereabouts well known as a Modernist and a typical union man. He remained true to his reputation before the convention; for as a remedy for the religious crisis of our times he advocated, with all the clearness and power at his command, a "Lutheranism which may at last cast away all the shackles of an old-fashioned confessionalism and fabricate a closer union with the Reformed bodies." He found that "the Eisenach and Copenhagen conventions had been *much too Lutheran* and that it were high time now for the third convention to hazard itself into deeper water." Since no discussion followed this eloquent cry in the desert, we cannot say what impression it made upon the assembly. At any rate, we have not heard of any protest or remonstrance. We believe that, as long as an organization like the Lutheran World Convention does not take serious steps in the way of demanding of the various bodies holding or seeking membership some serious house-cleaning in their midst, the much-heralded return of world Lutheranism to a pure and strict confessional attitude will be found wanting. If Lutheranism wishes to sit again at the feet of the great Reformer, let it begin to learn from him the very first lesson, namely, the courage to refuse the fraternal hand to all those who consistently make light of God's Word and Scriptural teaching, and to say to them: *"Ihr habt einen andern Geist als wir."* That is the only way which leads out of the religious crisis.

The Tuesday sessions were devoted to the discussion of the second great question: "Lutheranism and Inner Missions at the Present Time." We could not attend the morning session. An important paper was read in the afternoon, however, by Dr. Reu of the American Lutheran Church on "The Church and the Social Problem." Summing up the social difficulties of our age, which no longer affect the laboring classes only, but all the divine institutions: matrimony, family, Church and State, involving the entire question concerning the relation of the individual to the entire human society, Dr. Reu sought to answer the question: What is the attitude the Church must take towards the "social problem"? The Church, he said, is especially qualified and divinely equipped to contribute toward

a solution. She dare not remain silent over against the materialistic and selfish attitude of human society. She has a divine mission to raise her voice against philosophies of the Marx and Lenin kind. Furthermore, she has the *right* to speak in behalf of the unprivileged classes (Dr. Reu cited the example of Luther writing to the city counselors, princes, and noblemen of Germany, putting his finger on definite sore spots and abuses: usury, etc.). But like Luther the Church to-day must continue to avoid all interference with state authorities and abstain from formulating detailed proposals to the legislatures. Just what measures are to be taken concerns the state government alone. The Church can but uphold and proclaim certain principles of social justice. We heartily agree with all this on one condition, which can never be stressed too much, *viz.*, that the Church must constantly be awake to the fact that even in its legitimate work and activity for social welfare her main strength lies in her message to the *individual* heart and that in the first and last analysis her *only* aim and purpose in this world is the salvation and protection of the *individual* soul.

"Lutheranism and the Heathen Missions at the Present Time" was the third important question dealt with during the Lutheran World Convention. Here we gained the impression that the general opinion of the conference, though condemning the ill-famed "Laymen's Report" known as "Rethinking Missions," yet seemed to be very much in favor of the views voiced at the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council (some of the delegates even advocated a close cooperation with this council), condemning the policy of strongly confessional churches to urge their confessional particularities upon the converts in mission-fields. We did agree with the speakers at the convention when they said that our Foreign Missions should strive toward an absolutely independent "indigenous Church," which should accept the confessions of the home Church of its *own* accord, without pressure exerted by the missionary, without his playing the role of a dictator. It is our opinion, too, that, "if non-Christian lands are to be won for Christ, it must be through the Christians of those lands." And most of all we share the opinion that "God cannot use us to help the younger [heathen] churches to rise to a level higher than our own at home" and "that it is in the sending churches that the issues must first be clarified" (we quote Rev. Astrup Larsen of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America); this is especially true as regards purity of doctrine and discipline. But it was to be noted throughout most of the essays and reports read to the convention that the desire for "indigenous, autonomous churches," left to themselves for inner development, makes much too light of the Confessions of our Church, as though the foreign Christians could get along without them, as though our Confessions were

merely of historical interest, and as though the faith of the Hindu or Chinese Christian need not necessarily coincide with these Confessions. When Rev. Larsen pointed to the National Lutheran Church of China as a model for the "indigenous Church" which is to be developed in mission-fields, we were not much encouraged by this example. This Church is formed by the union of ten synods representing six nationalities. It would be true indeed that "nothing essentially Lutheran *need* be lost by the National Lutheran Church in China in taking over peculiar elements from the sending churches and adapting them to the racial genius of the Chinese people" if — if the "peculiar elements" in question concerned only differences in outward customs, rites, ceremonies, liturgies, mode of government, etc. But what if there are differences in doctrinal questions and Scriptural practise? By the union of conservative and liberal elements the "indigenous" Lutheran Church of China has gained nothing except the spirit of doctrinal indifference, un-Lutheran syncretism, and anti-Scriptural tolerance, as becomes only too evident when one reads the *Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Lutheran Church in China*, 1934 (God's Word and the Bible are made to be two different concepts; conversion is something different from faith; such and similar errors abound in its pages). It suffices, too, to listen to the words of Dr. Svenson, missionary of that Church, who summed up the needs of the Lutheran Church at home and in the mission-fields as follows: "We need an awakening; there is too much form, too much learning, too much theology; we need life." Certainly we need life, but it cannot come through the channels of that sectarian hypersensual revivalism, accompanied by tongue-speaking and nervous prostration as it is practised by the National Chinese Church and considered by Dr. Svenson so beautiful and wonderful. Much less can we be in accord with an "indigenous Church" of the kind advocated by Dr. Gurubotham of India, who pleaded for a union of all Christian missions, for abandoning all confessional particularities and retaining only those teachings wherein all denominations agree. The speaker felt that "one should not try to argue Hindu Christians into accepting *such things* as the Unaltered Augsburg Confession or the Small Catechism." "Let us liberate the Hindu Christians from these 'heritages.'" It is true that Dr. Gurubotham, according to the explanations made to the convention by Dr. Ihmels, is only a Hindu layman and medical worker and therefore "unqualified to know what are the needs of Christian mission-work"; and Rev. Larsen felt that M. Gurubotham "goes too far"; but again he said "that he can well understand him"; and why not? He himself holds that, although we should not surrender our Lutheran Confessions, we must nevertheless cooperate with other denominations to a certain extent. He pleaded for a greater interest of the Lutheran Church in interdenomi-

national missionary conferences, such as the Edinburgh Conference or the Jerusalem Meeting. He said: "Lutheran participation in the work of these agencies has not been as general and whole-hearted as it might have been. There are those who criticize us for allowing 'principles' to keep us separate in normal times, but casting our principles aside and appealing, for example, to the International Missionary Council when emergencies arise." We say: Why not let this be a warning to all hereafter to be true to the principles of the Lutheran Church and more than ever to avoid all fraternal contact with those whose spirit is not ours? Lutherans cannot be more friendly or conciliatory towards erring denominations on the mission-field than they are at home. We much preferred the report of a Danish Lutheran missionary in Japan — we have forgotten his name — who courageously defended the truth that "Lutheranism is suitable for, and can be comprehended in its fulness by, any individual of any race, including the mystic doctrines concerning the Sacraments, not omitting the Scriptural teaching of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper. He asked: "If we are real Lutherans, *convinced* of the truth of our faith, what else could we teach them? If I were convinced that the teachings of the Baptist Church were more 'suitable to the temperament and the racial genius of the Japanese,' I could not myself remain a Lutheran another day. It is true, unity in ceremonies and institutions is not necessary; unity in faith and doctrine suffices; but *this* unity *must* exist! If any one wishes to cooperate with us or join us, let him rally to our teachings." It was a pleasure to hear this voice among the chorus of discordant opinions. And again, we wonder how the above-mentioned missionary to the Japanese felt when an American colleague of his (working in the same organization, in Japan), the Rev. J. Winther, speaking on the youth problem in Foreign Missions, mentioned as one of the chief obstacles to effective work among the youth "a too theological, too bookish, a *too conservative* religion."

This leads us to the discussion of another important problem viewed by the Lutheran World Convention, "Lutheranism and the Coming Generation," in a series of ten-minute talks. Dr. Ryden of the Augustana Synod opened the series: Youth, in the midst of the general confusion of the modern world, needs the Church, and the Church needs the help of its young people. Youth has an opportunity and asks for it. It is up to the Church to mobilize its forces and direct them into useful channels. The period after confirmation is just as important as that before; for then the real struggles begin. Dr. Ryden advocated a program of youth organization similar to that of the great leagues within American Lutheranism and especially mentioned the example of the Walther League. We ceased to agree with the speaker when he declared that "youth is impatient with

hair-splitting theological differences" and that "we ought to cease discovering differences and look to what extent we agree with the other communions in order to present a united front against a hostile world."

Dr. Trexler of the Synod of New York added no new suggestion, but briefly recalled that the Church has always been "the Church of the young," the great figures of Christianity having generally been young men at the time of their greatest success (Jesus, the apostles, Luther, Wesley, Moody, etc.). He called upon the churches to follow the example of Luther, "who made the newly invented printing-press work overtime," and to use to the utmost all modern inventions for the purpose of spreading the message of the Cross.

The spokesman of Estonian Lutheranism affirmed that the attitude of the youth in his country demonstrates the fact that the new generation will have nothing to do with Lutheranism unless the latter possesses, and holds firmly to, the truth. Youth insists on Lutheranism in its original form, standing squarely on the Confessions. It demands an authoritative religion and therefore the reaffirmation of the old Lutheran principles: *sola Scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide.* The Estonian bishop advocated a return to the Small Catechism, "which contains everything that modern youth needs." We of course were delighted, but could not fail to notice the lack of harmony in the churches represented at the Lutheran World Convention. Next we heard a young delegate from Germany, who spoke similarly to the Estonian bishop. He, too, held that the younger generation, in Germany at least, demands authority and is sickened by the speculative theology and liberalistic thinking of yesterday. Lutheranism which has become untrue to itself through Liberalism is to-day doomed to silence and contempt. If the Lutheran message wishes to be heard, it must demand obedience to the authority of Scriptural doctrine and agreement with the Lutheran Confessions. We were pleased to hear at last also one representative of the Parisian clergy affirm as *the* need of present-day Lutheranism, if it wishes to keep its youth in the fold, the abandoning of all *unionistic* practises. He deplored that there were still many pastors who showed too much fondness for things that are not Lutheran. All depends on the pastor; youth will reflect the color of its pastor. We should like to share the optimism of that young friend, who believes that the movement toward renewed and faithful confessionalism in French Lutheran circles will come out victorious. What it needs is more than words — action!

From Norway came a different tune. The Norwegian delegate showed a great deal of sympathy for the Oxford Movement as a means of doing effective work among the younger generation estranged from its Church. Lutheranism, he says, is a religion of tolerance and must

search and strive for a large union of churches. Furthermore, it should not only preach a hereafter, but participate in the establishment of a kingdom of God on earth, where peace and social justice reign; then it will regain the respect and the cooperation of the coming generation. . . . We refrain from any comment.

Konsistorialrat Dietrich of Poland was the last essayist to speak on the subject. His views were altogether opposed to those of the previous speaker, though he did not say so directly. According to his opinion the Church must teach youth the Second Article of our faith so strongly that it may become deeply rooted in their hearts, no matter whether it will prove to be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. Modern youth, without distinction of race or nationality, needs *nothing new* in theology; what it needs is the old, unwavering Lutheran faith. For the sake of completeness we mention the opinion of Missionary Winther of Japan, who warned against a "too conservative and too theological a religion" in our work among the youth of our day. — I wonder what lessons the delegates of the Lutheran World Convention took home for application in their work among the young people of their Church. There was a great choice of suggestions, some good, some very bad. One thing they could not take home, and that is the conviction that Lutheranism throughout the world is absolutely united in spirit and in truth and that all Lutherans entertain the same high ideals and have the same aspirations.

If the Lutheran World Convention were but a *free* conference of Lutherans seeking to establish true unity on the basis of the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions, such a convention would merit our heartiest approval. But since it choses to be and remain an organization with an official membership, where one finds fraternal cooperation and recognition, solidary action, and Communion fellowship; since it admits church-bodies on a simple presentation of the confessional paragraph in its constitution, — and which Lutheran body in the world, no matter how great its doctrinal corruption and laxity, does not possess a satisfactory paragraph of that kind? — we continue to withhold our approval.

I have passed over another important topic discussed at the convention on Thursday morning: "Lutheranism and the Present World Crisis," since I was absent on that morning, not wishing to give up my children's instruction classes. Professor Sasse of Erlangen read an essay on that topic. A very interesting private discussion with Professor Sasse later on did not make up for what I missed.

Paris, France. F. Kreiss.

Luther on the Study and Use of the Ancient Languages.

From his treatise *To the Mayors and Aldermen of All the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools*, as translated by F. V. N. Painter in his book *Luther on Education*.

But, you say again, if we shall and must have schools, what is the use to teach Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and the other liberal arts? Is it not enough to teach the Scriptures, which are necessary to salvation, in the mother tongue? To which I answer: I know, alas! that we Germans must always remain irrational brutes, as we are deservedly called by surrounding nations. But I wonder why we do not also say: Of what use to us are silk, wine, spices, and other foreign articles, since we ourselves have an abundance of wine, corn, wool, flax, wood, and stone in the German states, not only for our necessities, but also for embellishment and ornament? The languages and other liberal arts, which are not only harmless, but even a greater ornament, benefit, and honor than these things, both for understanding the Holy Scriptures and carrying on the civil government, we are disposed to despise; and the foreign articles, which are neither necessary nor useful and which besides greatly impoverish us, we are unwilling to dispense with. Are we not rightly called German dunces and brutes?

Indeed, if the languages were of no practical benefit, we ought still to feel an interest in them as a wonderful gift of God, with which He has now blessed Germany almost beyond all other lands. We do not find many instances in which Satan has fostered them through the universities and cloisters; on the contrary, these institutions have fiercely inveighed, and continue to inveigh, against them. For the devil scented the danger that would threaten his kingdom if the languages should be generally studied. But since he could not wholly prevent their cultivation, he aims at least to confine them within such narrow limits that they will of themselves decline and fall into disuse. They are to him no welcome guest, and consequently he shows them scant courtesy in order that they may not remain long. This malicious trick of Satan is perceived by very few.

Therefore, my beloved countrymen, let us open our eyes, thank God for this precious treasure, and take pains to preserve it and to frustrate the design of Satan. For we cannot deny that, although the Gospel has come, and daily comes, through the Holy Spirit, it has come by means of the languages and through them must increase and be preserved. For when God wished through the apostles to spread the Gospel abroad in all the world, He gave the languages for that purpose; and by means of the Roman Empire he made Latin and Greek the languages of many lands that His Gospel might

speedily bear fruit far and wide. He has done the same now. For a time no one understood why God has revived the study of the languages; but now we see that it was for the sake of the Gospel, which He wished to bring to light and thereby expose and destroy the reign of Antichrist. For the same reason He gave Greece a prey to the Turks in order that Greek scholars, driven from home and scattered abroad, might bear the Greek tongue to other countries and thereby excite an interest in the study of languages.

In the same measure that the Gospel is dear to us should we zealously cherish the languages. For God had a purpose in giving the Scripture only in two languages, the Old Testament in the Hebrew and the New Testament in the Greek. What God did not despise, but chose before all others for His Word we should likewise esteem above all others. St. Paul, in the third chapter of Romans, points out, as a special honor and advantage of the Hebrew language, that God's Word was given in it: "What profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly because that unto them [the Jews] were committed the oracles of God." [1] Likewise King David boasts in the Hundred and Forty-seventh Psalm: "He showeth His Word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for His judgments, they have not known them." [2] Hence the Hebrew language is called sacred. And St. Paul, in Rom. 1, 2, speaks of the Hebrew Scriptures as holy, no doubt because of the Word of God which they contain. In like manner the Greek language might well be called holy, because it was chosen, in preference to others, as the language of the New Testament. And from this language, as from a fountain, the New Testament has flowed through translations into other languages and sanctified them also.

And let this be kept in mind, that we will not preserve the Gospel without the languages. The languages are the scabbard in which the Word of God is sheathed. They are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; the cask in which this wine is kept; the chamber in which this food is stored, and, to borrow a figure from the Gospel itself, they are the baskets in which this bread and fish and fragments are preserved. If through neglect we lose the languages (which God may forbid!), we will not only lose the Gospel, but it will finally come to pass that we will lose also the ability to speak and write either Latin or German. Of this let us take as proof and warning the miserable and shocking example presented in the universities and cloisters, in which not only the Gospel has been perverted, but also the Latin and German languages have been corrupted, so that the wretched inmates have become like brutes, unable to speak and write German or Latin, and have almost lost their natural reason.

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1) Rom. 3, 1. 2. 2) Ps. 147, 19. 20.

The apostles considered it necessary to embody the New Testament in the Greek language in order, no doubt, that it might be securely preserved unto us as in a sacred shrine. For they foresaw what has since taken place, namely, that, when the divine revelation is left to oral tradition, much disorder and confusion arise from conflicting opinions and doctrines. And there would be no way to prevent this evil and to protect the simple-minded if the New Testament were not definitely recorded in writing. Therefore it is evident that where the languages are not preserved, there the Gospel will become corrupted.

Experience shows this to be true. For immediately after the age of the apostles, when the languages ceased to be cultivated, the Gospel and the true faith and Christianity itself declined more and more, until they were entirely lost under the Pope. And since the time that the languages disappared, not much that is noteworthy and excellent has been seen in the Church; but through ignorance of the languages very many shocking abominations have arisen. On the other hand, since the revival of learning such a light has been shed abroad and such important changes have taken place that the world is astonished and must acknowledge that we have the Gospel almost as pure and unadulterated as it was in the times of the apostles and much purer than it was in the days of St. Jerome and St. Augustine. In a word, since the Holy Ghost, who does nothing foolish or useless, has often bestowed the gift of tongues, it is our evident duty earnestly to cultivate the languages, now that God has restored them to the world through the revival of learning.

But many of the Church Fathers, you say, have become saints and have taught without a knowledge of the languages. That is true. But to what do you attribute their frequent misunderstanding of the Scriptures? How often is St. Augustine in error in the Psalms and in other expositions, as well as Hilary, and indeed all those who have undertaken to explain the Scriptures without an acquaintance with the original tongues! And if perchance they have taught correct doctrine, they have not been sure of the application to be made of particular passages. For example, it is truly said that Christ is the Son of God. But what mockery does it seem to adversaries when as proof of that doctrine Ps. 110, 3 is adduced: *"Tecum principium in die virtutis,"* since in the Hebrew no reference is made in that verse to the Deity. When the faith is thus defended with uncertain reasons and proof-texts, does it not seem a disgrace and mockery in the eyes of such adversaries as are acquainted with the Greek and the Hebrew? And they are only rendered the more obstinate in their error and with good ground hold our faith as a human delusion.

What is the reason that our faith is thus brought into disgrace?

It is our ignorance of the languages; and the only remedy is a knowledge of them. Was not St. Jerome forced to make a new translation of the Psalms from the Hebrew because the Jews, when quotations were made from the Latin version, derided the Christians, affirming that the passages adduced were not found in the original? The comments of all the ancient Fathers, who, without a knowledge of the languages, have treated of the Scriptures (although they may teach nothing heretical), are still of such a character that the writers often employ uncertain, doubtful, and inappropriate expressions and grope like a blind man along a wall, so that they often miss the sense of the text and mold it according to their pious fancy, as in the example mentioned in the last paragraph. St. Augustine himself was obliged to confess that the Christian teacher, in addition to Latin, should be acquainted with Hebrew and Greek. Without this knowledge the expositor will inevitably fall into mistakes; and even when the languages are understood, he will meet with difficulties.

With a simple preacher of the faith it is different from what it is with the expositor of the Scriptures, or prophet, as St. Paul calls him. The former has so many clear passages and texts in translations that he is able to understand and preach Christ and lead a holy life. But to explain the Scriptures, to deal with them independently, and oppose heretical interpreters, such a one is too weak without a knowledge of the languages. But we need just such expositors, who will give themselves to the study and interpretation of the Scriptures and who are able to controvert erroneous doctrines; for a pious life and orthodox teaching are not alone sufficient. Therefore the languages are absolutely necessary as well as prophets or expositors; but it is not necessary that every Christian or preacher be such a prophet, according to the diversity of gifts of which St. Paul speaks in 1 Cor. 12, 8. 9 and in Eph. 4, 11.

This explains why since the days of the apostles the Scriptures have remained in obscurity and no reliable and enduring expositions have anywhere been written. For even the holy Fathers, as we have said, are often in error, and because they were not versed in the languages, they seldom agree. St. Bernard was a man of great ability, so that I am inclined to place him above all other distinguished teachers, whether ancient or modern; but how often he trifles with the Scriptures, in a spiritual manner to be sure, and wrests them from their true meaning! For the same reason the papists have said that the Scriptures are of obscure and peculiar import. But they do not perceive that the trouble lies in ignorance of the languages; but for this, nothing simpler has ever been spoken than the Word of God. A Turk must indeed speak unintelligibly to me, although a Turkish child of seven years understands him, because I am unacquainted with the language.

Hence it is foolish to attempt to learn the Scriptures through the comments of the fathers and the study of many books and glosses. For that purpose we ought to give ourselves to the languages. For the beloved Fathers, because they were not versed in the languages, have often failed, in spite of their verbose expositions, to give the meaning of the text. You peruse their writings with great toil; and yet with a knowledge of the languages you can get the meaning of Scripture better than they do. For in comparison with the glosses of the Fathers the languages are as sunlight to darkness.

Since, then, it behooves Christians at all times to use the Bible as their only book and to be thoroughly acquainted with it, especially is it a disgrace and sin at the present day not to learn the languages when God provides every facility, incites us to study, and wishes to have His Word known. Oh, how glad the honored Fathers would have been if they could have learned the languages and had such access to the Holy Scriptures! With what pain and toil they scarcely obtained crumbs, while almost without effort we are able to secure the whole loaf! Oh, how their industry shames our idleness; yea, how severely will God punish our neglect and ingratitude!

St. Paul, in 1 Cor. 14, 29,[3]) enjoins that there be judgment upon doctrine — a duty that requires a knowledge of the languages. For the preacher or teacher may publicly read the whole Bible as he chooses, right or wrong, if there be no one present to judge whether he does it correctly or not. But if one is to judge, there must be an acquaintance with the languages; otherwise the judging will be in vain. Hence, although faith and the Gospel may be preached by ordinary ministers without the languages, still such preaching is sluggish and weak, and the people finally become weary and fall away. But a knowledge of the languages renders it lively and strong, and faith finds itself constantly renewed through rich and varied instruction. In the First Psalm the Scriptures liken such study to "a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season; its leaf also shall not wither."

Der Schriftgrund für die Lehre von der satisfactio vicaria.

(Fortsetzung.)

Titus 2, 14. (Siehe S. 748 f. dieses Bandes.)

1 Petr. 1, 18. 19: Wissend (da ihr wißt), daß ihr nicht mit vergänglichen (Dingen), Silber oder Gold, erlöset wurdet von eurem eitlen, von den Vätern überlieferten Wandel, sondern mit köstlichem Blut, als

3) "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge."

eines Lammes fehllos und ohne Makel, nämlich Christi.

Der Passus V. 13—21 enthält eine Mahnung zu glaubensfester und freudiger Hoffnung auf Grund der Gnade, die in der Offenbarung JEsu Christi enthalten ist. Auf Grund des Empfanges dieser Gnade, so führt der Apostel aus, sollen die Christen sich als gehorsame Kinder Gottes verhalten und beweisen und demnach in ihrem ganzen Wandel heilig sein.

Diese Ermahnung wird nun noch eindringlicher motiviert durch die Erinnerung an den unvergleichlichen Preis, den der Sohn Gottes erlegt hat, um die Erlösung der Menschheit zu erzielen. Das Partizip macht die Ermahnung besonders eindrucksvoll: Da ihr wißt, weil ihr die Erkenntnis habt. Das war den Christen in den nördlichen Provinzen Kleinasiens vom Apostel mit besonderem Nachdruck ans Herz gelegt worden, diese Erkenntnis hatten sie durch die ihnen gegebene Belehrung gewonnen, daß sie nämlich nicht vermittels vergänglicher Dinge oder Werte (φθαρτά, fast substantivisch) losgekauft worden waren. Nein, das Lösegeld, das in diesem Falle entrichtet wurde, ging weit über alle gewöhnlichen Vergleiche hinaus. Sonst könnte man wohl an Silber und Gold denken, da Geld und Geldeswert gebraucht wurden, um Menschen von leiblicher Knechtschaft zu erlösen und zu befreien. Hier aber war die Sachlage so: Die Leser des Briefes hatten unter der Knechtschaft eines eitlen, sittlich gehaltlosen Wesens gelebt. Es war ein Leben und Wesen, wie sie es von ihren Vätern her, durch viele Generationen hindurch, überkommen hatten. Manche Ausleger denken wegen φθαρτά und μάταιος an die Eitelkeit des Kälberdienstes in der Wüste, die sich dann auch noch später hie und da im Volke Israel fand. Andere denken an die Gehaltlosigkeit des ganzen heidnischen Götzendienstes, von dem ja schon der Psalmist sagt: „Die Nichtse der Heiden sind Silber und Gold." Diese alten götzendienerischen Religionen hatten einen gewaltigen Halt an den Seelen ihrer Anhänger, nicht nur eine vis inertiae, sondern eine Stärke, die sich mit der größten Zähigkeit behauptete.

Aber was keines Menschen Macht an sich ausgerichtet hätte, das vermochte die Kraft der stellvertretenden Genugtuung Christi. Die Menschen sind erlöst, losgemacht, losgekauft von dem sittlich gehaltlosen Leben, das sie nach der väterlichen Überlieferung geführt hatten. Die Erlösung ist durch Christum geschehen; die objektive Versöhnung ist durch ihn bereitet worden. Und der von ihm erlegte Preis ist kein geringerer als der seines eigenen kostbaren Blutes, das unbeschreiblichen und unvergleichlichen Wert hat, weil es das Blut des Gottessohnes ist. Dabei wird der stellvertretende Charakter der Versöhnung hervorgehoben durch die nähere Bestimmung als eines Lammes fleckenlos und ohne Makel. Christus ist das Lamm Gottes, Joh. 1, 29, das sich für die Sünde der Welt dahingegeben hat. Und sein Opfer hat ewige Gültigkeit und Kraft, weil er ohne Fleck und ohne Makel ist, heilig, un-

schuldig, unbefleckt, von den Sündern abgesondert und höher denn der Himmel, Hebr. 7, 26. So hat Christus, das Lamm Gottes, sein Leben gegeben in dieser einzigartigen und vollkommenen Stellvertretung, die auf ewige Zeiten genügt; denn mit einem Opfer hat er in Ewigkeit vollendet, die geheiligt werden.

Hebr. 9, 15. (Siehe Band V, 930 f.)

Hebr. 10, 19. 20: Da wir nun, Brüder, Zuversicht haben zum Eingang in das Heiligste in dem Blute JEsu, den er eingeweiht hat für uns als frischen und lebendigen Weg, durch den Vorhang hindurch, das ist, sein Fleisch.

Der heilige Schreiber ermahnt hier, ganz ähnlich wie Petrus in den eben behandelten Worten, zum rechten Festhalten und zu ordentlichem Gebrauch der neutestamentlichen Heilsgüter. Er hatte im vorhergehenden Abschnitt die Ungenügsamkeit der Opfer des Alten Bundes geschildert, um demgegenüber um so nachdrücklicher den Wert der einmaligen Selbsthingabe Christi zu betonen. Der Übergang zu dem neuen Paragraphen liegt in den Worten: „Wo aber Vergebung von diesen ist, da ist kein Opfer mehr für die Sünde."

Eben diesen Gedanken führt der heilige Schreiber nun etwas weiter aus. Er weist hin auf die Zuversicht, die Getrostheit, die Gewißheit, die wir Christen haben durch das Blut Christi, durch die Tatsache, daß unser Heiland sein Blut an unserer Statt vergossen hat. Wir haben diese Getrostheit zum Eingang in das Heiligste des Himmels. Er, der selber der Weg und die Wahrheit und das Leben ist, hat uns diesen Weg zum Himmel eingeweiht und geöffnet. Er hat uns die Stätte bereitet und es uns ermöglicht, ihm nachzugehen. Vgl. Joh. 14, 1 ff. Er ist unser Vorläufer, unser *πρόδρομος* (Kap. 6, 19. 20), und wir sollen und können ihm nachfolgen. Es ist ein frischer Weg, einer, der erst neulich eröffnet worden ist. Und er ist ein lebendiger Weg, nicht ein solcher, der durch tote Räume führt, sondern er hat selber das Gottesleben in sich, so daß er die Kraft hat, alle, die darauf wandeln, gewißlich an ihr Ziel zu führen.

Ein weiteres Bild wird hinzugefügt in den Worten durch den Vorhang hindurch, das ist, sein Fleisch. Wie der große Vorhang vor dem Allerheiligsten im Tempel zu Jerusalem am Todestage des Heilandes zerrissen wurde, so daß das Allerheiligste nun vor den Augen der ganzen Welt enthüllt war, so hat Christus durch seine Selbsthingabe den Vorhang seines Fleisches geöffnet und zerrissen. Es war nach Gottes ewigem Rat und Willen nötig, daß der Heiland sein Leben, seinen Leib, in den Tod gab. Aber eben durch den Tod Christi und durch seinen darauffolgenden Eingang in des Himmels Herrlichkeit ist alles zubereitet, zugerichtet worden, so daß wir nun ungehinderten Zugang zu dem Gnadenthron haben. Dies alles hat die stellvertretende Genugtuung Christi bewirkt. P. E. K.

(Fortsetzung folgt.)

Sermon Study on 2 Cor. 4, 3—6.

(Eisenach Epistle-Lesson for Epiphany.)

We shall not be able to understand this beautiful passage without a knowledge of the preceding context. The apostle had begun to defend the divinity and the glory of his office and the blamelessness of his personal character against the scurrilous attacks made against both by his opponents in Corinth. He had spoken of the divinity of his office chap. 3, 1—5, of the glory of the ministry of the Gospel, whose glory far transcends that of the ministry of the Law. In view of this greater glory of the New Testament ministry there was no need of placing a veil on the face of a minister of the Gospel. Moses needed such a veil lest the Israelites see the gradual passing away of his glory and hence refuse to submit to him and his ministration of a covenant whose glory would in the course of time pass away, as the glory symbolical of it passed away from the face of Moses, chap. 3, 13. They were to wait patiently and bear the heavy burden of ceremonial rituals until God Himself would end the dispensation of the Law and inaugurate the greater, imperishable glory of the Gospel era. In the day of Paul this time had fully arrived. Hence in clear and unmistakable language, which left nothing hidden, Paul proclaimed that liberty from the Old Testament dispensation which had been procured by Christ. Alas! instead of rejoicing at the news, the Jews rejected the Gospel and opposed and even persecuted those who preached it. Why? Their minds were blinded, v. 14; a veil was still hanging before their eyes. Once the veil covering Moses' face served a good purpose; but now it was "done away in Christ." Now the refusal of the Jews to come out of the bondage of the Ceremonial Law and accept the glorious liberty of Christ, their misapplied loyalty to the Mosaic Law, hung like a veil before their hearts, effectually preventing their acceptance of Jesus as the Christ, v. 15. This veil remains until the Jew is converted. No hope for salvation for any Jew except through removal of the veil by faith in Jesus. Such faith can be wrought only by the Lord, who is that Spirit, v. 17, of whom Paul had spoken, giving life, v. 6, and righteousness, v. 9, and liberty, v. 17. Thank God, says the apostle, we no longer have the veil before our eyes. We behold the glory of the Lord, though not yet in the perfection of yonder life, but still as through a glass, darkly, 1 Cor. 13, 12; yet we see Him in His glory, our God, our Lord, our Savior. His glory is a living and life-giving glory, changing us into the same image from glory to glory already in this life, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Since so glorious a Gospel has been committed unto the ministers of the Gospel by the grace of God, they weary not in proclaiming this message and for that very reason they strive after holiness of life

before God and man, lest the glory of the Gospel be dimmed by the imperfection of their lives, chap. 4, 1. 2.

And now the apostle takes up an objection that may have been voiced frequently in order to disparage the Gospel he preached. If your Gospel is really the revelation of the glory of God, why do not all men accept it? Why does it not prove its alleged divine power of illumination by converting all mankind? In answer to this question the apostle writes: "But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." "To them," *ἐν*, in them, in their hearts. The Gospel in itself is not a veiled, obscure matter, but a bright and shining light, as the apostle declares vv. 4. 6. And this Gospel, clear as sunlight, is not hidden under a bushel, but was already in those early days of the Christian Church sending forth its bright rays into Asia Minor, Europe, and even into dark Africa. But as the Light of the world, Jesus Christ, was in the world and the world knew Him not, John 1, 5. 10, so the light of the Gospel, proceeding from the uncreated Light, shone forth among the nations, but was "hid to them." The apostle uses the word *κεκαλυμμένον*, referring back to *κάλυμμα*, chap. 3, 13, the *veil*, and to v. 18, where he had spoken of the face, *ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ*, the unveiled face. As it was the fault of the Jews of his day that the veil was still hanging before their heart, so it is the fault of every one to whom the Gospel remains hidden, veiled, that it is so veiled. That is due to the sad fact that such a one still is one of those that are lost, perishing. The apostle uses the present participle, describing their condition as being lost, in a state of perishing. Who these perishing ones are, is stated in the next verse, "they which believe not." They may still be saved out of perdition, just as the Jews may have the veil removed from their hearts, if they will turn to the Lord. If they cease their unbelief, then the Gospel will no longer be hid; then they will not perish, but have everlasting life, John 3, 16. But as long as they believe not, so long is the Gospel hid; and as long as the Gospel is hid, they will perish; and as long as they are in a state of perishing, the Gospel is hid from them. Lost, perishing, dying, on the way to eternal death, is every one to whom the Gospel is hid, not only the ignorant barbarian, but also the cultured Greek; not only the illiterate Bushman, but also the learned university graduate. All the learning, all the culture, that man may have acquired will not avail him if the Gospel of Christ is still veiled to him, if that is not yet to him the wisdom of God and the power of God. But why does it remain hidden to those that are perishing? Why does not the Gospel reveal its glory to them, illumine their dark and unbelieving hearts? The fault lies not in the Gospel, as though it were not sufficient to overcome the darkness of man's heart, Rom. 1, 16. Nor does the fault rest with God, as though He were unwilling to take the veil from their hearts,

Ezek. 33, 11; 1 Tim. 2, 4; 2 Pet. 3, 9. The fault lies elsewhere, as the apostle points out.

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," v. 4. In the form of a participle clause the apostle states the reason why the Gospel is veiled to them that are lost. The god of this world blinds their minds. *Αἰῶν*, an age, a period of time, in New Testament usage the phrase "this age, this world," signifies especially the period preceding the last advent of Christ, a period of wickedness, in which sin and Satan still rule, as distinguished from the "the world to come," Matt. 12, 32, the Kingdom of Glory. The "god" of this world, of this age of wickedness, is, of course, Satan, called god in the sense of ruler, as Christ calls him the prince of this world, John 12, 31; 14, 30; 16, 11; and Paul calls him prince of the air, Eph. 2, 2; cp. Eph. 6, 12. In so far as this age is a creation of God, God is and remains the Ruler; but in so far as it is evil, it emanates only from Satan. Satan has not the least part in the creation and preservation of the world; that is a work solely and entirely of God. And God has not the least part in the creation and preservation of sin and evil; that is solely and altogether the work of Satan. Because the present world in its entirety lieth in the Wicked One, 1 John 5, 19, cp. 18, this Wicked One may indeed, and very properly, be called the god, the ruler, of this world, a god who has subjects far more eager to serve him than even Christians are willing to do the will of their Savior-God. This god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers. The apostle uses the aorist, viewing Satan's work not so much in its various stages, but as an act complete in itself. God had created man upright, with a knowledge of that which was good. Though Adam and Eve had no experience of that which was evil, yet they knew that it would not be good to disobey God. Though they had not yet experienced the slightest desire to commit such a great wickedness and sin against God, yet Satan succeeded in blinding their minds by instilling doubt as to the word of God in their hearts, by veiling this word of their Creator, obscuring its true meaning. That has ever since been the work of this arch-enemy of God and man, the blinding of their minds, *νοήματα*, the products of the *νοῦς*, the thoughts, wishes, plans, desires, etc. These thoughts, etc., are the thoughts of them that believe not; thoughts arising out of unbelieving hearts, out of hearts of such as know not God, but are aliens and enemies of God, Rom. 8, 7; hence thoughts by their very origin sinful, opposed to God, hostile to Him. And as soon as these sinful thoughts arise in the hearts of the unbelievers, they are blinded by Satan, so that they cannot possibly perceive, see, understand, that whereby man can alone be saved. That is the sinister purpose Satan has in mind, as the

apostle puts it, "lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ . . . should shine unto them." Light, *φωτισμός*. The Greek word etymologically means the act of illumination; yet it is used quite frequently in classical Greek in the sense of light, brightness, and the LXX use this word rather frequently in translating אוֹר, light. The current meaning of this word therefore seems to have been light, and there is no cogent reason to accept the word in the etymological meaning here as there is in v. 6. We therefore adopt the translation of the English Bible, *the light*. There is a light shining in this world, the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the Image of God. This Gospel speaks of the glory of Christ, a twofold glory. In the first place. it tells us that Christ, as Paul puts it, is the Image of God. True, also man is called the image of God. He was created in the image and after the likeness of God, Gen. 1, 26. 27; Eph. 4, 24; Col. 3, 10; 1 Cor. 11, 7. Yet man is a created image of God, an image pertaining only to certain attributes of God, hence an image which never made man the equal of the uncreated, eternal God. Christ is the Image of God in a unique sense. Even from eternity He is the Son of God's love, Col. 1, 3, the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of — or, as the context clearly indicates, *before* — all creatures, Col. 1, 15—17. Christ is the uncreated Image of God, by whom and for whom, for whose glory and service, all things were made. Therefore the Letter to the Hebrews calls Him "the Brightness of His glory," *ἀπαύγασμα*, the emission of brightness, the efflux of light, the effulgence of His glory, in whom the glory of God Himself shines forth. And He is called the express Image of His Person, *χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως*, the exact impress of His essence, in which not the slightest detail is missing, in whom we see the very essence of God in its fulness, Heb. 1, 3. In this unique sense only the eternal Son of the eternal Father is God's Image, very God of very God. Even after His incarnation, after He had become the Christ, He still is the Image of God in this unique sense, Col. 2, 9; John 1, 14; 3, 13; 10, 30; 14, 9. 10. While this glory was veiled during the days of His flesh in order that He might perform the work for which He had come into the world, He is now sitting at the right hand of the majesty of God in the heavenly places, Eph. 2, 20—23; Rev. 5, 6—14. Truly, the Gospel is a Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the Image of God. Yet that is only part of His glory. His is a glory even more important and praiseworthy to the children of men, the glory that this Christ is indeed the CHRIST, the Messiah, the divinely anointed, God-appointed Savior and Redeemer of the world. He, the Image of the invisible God, took upon Himself the likeness of man, Phil. 2, 7. 8; Heb. 2, 14—17, in order that He might restore to man, the sinner, that image of God which had been his chief ornament at creation, but which in unspeakable folly he had cast aside at the

instigation of Satan, becoming Satan's subject, like Satan an enemy of God, an outcast, doomed to eternal damnation. Through His vicarious obedience, His atoning sacrifice, His suffering and death He obtained for man forgiveness of sins, righteousness and perfection, so that man through faith in the Christ may again be an image of God, changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3, 18. A Gospel speaking of so glorious a person and so glorious a work is indeed a Gospel of glory; and since this message concerns us, all mankind, it is indeed a *Gospel,* an evangel, good tidings of great joy, a light indeed before which all darkness of sin, and sorrow, and despair, and death, and hell must disappear. This is the light which the apostles brought to the world in preaching Christ and Him crucified. And this is the light against which Satan ever directs his fiercest attacks. He knows that this Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. He knows that, once a man has accepted this Gospel, has come to this light, he is translated out of his kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ, the realms of light and life. In order to prevent this, in order to keep men from the light, from the enjoyment of life eternal, he blinds their minds lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God and the Redeemer of the world, shine, dawn, unto them and like the morning dawn dispel the gloom of night. Satan indeed is the adversary of God and man, the Wicked One.

The explanation which the apostle here gives does not answer all questions which human reason has put and will put. There is still the mystery, Why does God not prevent Satan from blinding the hearts of men? This question is not answered in the Bible. It is sufficient for us to know that this is in no manner the fault of God, that it is due to Satan, who blinds the minds of men, and to man, who suffers himself to be thus blinded. Beyond this answer we cannot go lest we be lost in the wilderness of Calvinism or in the desert of synergism. —

Satan still blinds the hearts and thoughts of men, and with no less success than in the days of the apostles. There still are one billion three hundred millions of heathen in the world, walking in utter darkness, not knowing, not having heard, of the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ. What blinding of hearts within the so-called Christian world! How many millions are blinded to the beauties of the Gospel by love of self, of riches, of pleasure, of honor. Christian Scientists brazenly palm off as science and Christianity what is neither the one nor the other, but the blind groping of unsound minds steeped in utter darkness. Bible critics wilfully close their eyes to plain statements of the Bible, deliberately misinterpret them in order to be able to charge the Bible with inaccuracies, obsti-

nately refusing to accept the evidence of the excavators' spades, closing their ears to the very stones crying out in corroboration of the Biblical records. What blinding of the minds goes on to this day in the Church of Rome, Pope and priests uniting to becloud the light of the Gospel by the infamous teaching of work-righteousness and trust in human efforts rather than in the grace of God in Christ Jesus! What blinding of the minds within the Reformed denominations, which deny clearly revealed truths simply because they will follow their own reason, which is blind, utterly blind, in matters spiritual. What blindness within our own Lutheran Church, blindness to the wonderful opportunities arising on all sides to bring the Gospel to others! What blindness to the real treasures of our Church, to our glorious heritage! What groping after new methods! What pandering to the *Zeitgeist!* What conformity with the world! What glorying in externals, in numbers, in "accomplishments" of Lutherans! What blindness to our own faults and failings! What reliance on mere formalism! Surely, Satan is still blinding the minds of men, and his efforts are just as successful as they were in the days of Christ and of Paul.

The apostle had closed with a panegyric of his Gospel. He continues: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Why the *for?* The apostle thereby justifies his hymn of praise of the Gospel. Our Gospel, he means to say, is indeed a bright and shining light, filled with heavenly glory; for we preach not ourselves, etc. We are not heralding ourselves, blowing our own horn. We are not, as some of our opponents slander us, preaching a man-made gospel, a gospel centering round about our own persons, having in view our own glorification, our own benefit. Nor are we preaching the Gospel of Christ for personal gain, for temporal advantages, in order to attract large numbers, and are therefore toning down its demands, beveling off its sharp edges, accommodating it to human reason, smoothing it down to suit popular fancy. No, no; we preach Christ Jesus the Lord. The only purpose of our preaching is to extol Christ, to exalt Jesus, to put Him into the place He claims as His and which rightfully belongs to Him, to proclaim Him Lord, King of kings and Lord of lords, the Messiah Jesus, who was crucified, dead, and buried for our sins, but was raised again on the third day for our justification and now sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. He, and He alone, is the subject of our preaching. His Gospel, the bright and shining light, we dare not dim by adding to it any thoughts of our own or by taking away the slightest ray of its divine perfection. We preach Christ Jesus, and our sole object in preaching Him is the glorification of His wonderful name, to say that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth

and things under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. 2, 10. 11.

"Ourselves"? So people may slander us, as though we were preaching ourselves. We can truthfully say that we preach ourselves indeed, but not in the manner that our opponents charge us with. "Ourselves your servants." So little do we seek our own advantage and interests in preaching our Gospel that we gladly become and remain servants, slaves, bondslaves, and *your* slaves, willing to give up all our own comfort and ease and convenience and gain in order to serve you, to bring the Gospel to you, to lead you out of darkness into this marvelous light. Such servants we are for the sake, because of, our Lord Jesus. Because this Jesus has saved us, because the life that we now live we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us, Gal. 2, 20, therefore, constrained by our love to this Jesus, we gladly are your servants that you also may become like unto us, the image of God. What a lesson for all who would be faithful pastors, yea, for all who like Paul have experienced the life-changing power of the Gospel of the glory of Jesus Christ!

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," v. 6. The sense is clear, even though the construction is not altogether smooth. It is best to supply *ἐστίν* before *ὃ ἔλαμψεν*. God shined in our hearts, coming into them by the preaching of the Gospel as the light falls into a dark and dreary place and then shining in our hearts with its life-giving rays, illuminating them, changing them from dens of darkness to temples of the living God, which are filled with the glory of heavenly light. The apostle expresses this in words of peculiar grandeur, suiting the language to the exalted subject, "towards, for, the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The English translators used here, the same as in v. 4, the word *light* for *φωτισμός*. This translation renders necessary the adding of the word *give*, which is really implied in "illumination." Without this addition the word *light* does not suit the context; hence we prefer here the translation illumination. Towards, for, *πρός*, is used here not merely of the purpose, but of the effect, as, *e. g.*, Luke 14, 32; John 11, 4; 1 John 5, 16; 2 Pet. 3, 16. "Of the knowledge" is the genitive of apposition or definition; the illumination consists in the knowledge. The words "in the face of Jesus Christ" are by some connected with "illumination." The sense remains the same whether we so combine it or, as many others do, with "glory of God." God's shining in the heart of the apostle was not without effect. While in many, through the wiles of Satan, the minds are blinded and the Gospel remains veiled, in our hearts God

shined for, towards, illumination, thus accomplishing His purpose. And this illumination consisted in the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The face is that part of the body whereby we most readily recognize a person, since it best reveals his identity. In the face of Jesus, as we become acquainted with Him in the Gospel, we learn to know the glory of God. There is no higher glory of God than that revealed to us through Jesus, in the face of Jesus, who is the exact image of God. Without Jesus we are without God, without hope. Knowing Jesus, we have God, we have illumination, light, divine hope, assurance that cannot make ashamed. All this is possible only because God has shined in our hearts, the same God who at creation "commanded the light to shine out of darkness." His word called light into existence where there was no light before, calling light to come forth where only darkness had existed. His almighty power has not ceased; His creative word has not lost its efficacy. The miracle of the first creation day is repeated whenever an unbeliever is brought to saving faith by the almighty word of the almighty grace of God. That does not imply that almighty grace is irresistible grace, forcing man against his will to accept what he would not have accepted had he not been compelled to do so against his will. No, God does not force conversion on any one. (Cp. *Triglotta,* p. 904; Form. Conc., Art. II, §§ 60. 63.) We have also been told by the apostle that Satan succeeds in blinding the hearts of man against the Gospel, which is invariably preached with the intention of saving and illuminating man. Yet illuminating grace is almighty grace; else no man could be changed from darkness to light, from death to life. It is not man, not human efforts, not human preparation, not human choice, that brings about this illumination; it is wrought by God's almighty grace alone, that same power that was operative in the work of calling light out of darkness on the first day.

The apostle connects this verse also with "for." Since we know that it is God alone who by His almighty grace has wrought this change in us, why should we preach ourselves and not rather Him through whom alone God has made possible this work of illumination? Preaching ourselves would frustrate the very purpose of our ministry, the salvation of mankind. And since we know that God has expelled the darkness from our hearts, which was no less dense than the darkness in other hearts, Eph. 2, 3; since we know that the Gospel of the glory of Christ succeeded in foiling the attempts of Satan to keep our hearts blinded, as he had blinded us while we were still unbelievers; since we know that this Gospel has removed the veil which was upon our hearts also; therefore we willingly, gladly, preach Jesus Christ the Lord, willingly, gladly, become and remain your servants, proclaiming to you the Gospel of the glory of Christ that you also may have the light of the knowledge of the glory of

God in the face of Jesus Christ and, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Epiphany, the manifestation of the glory of Jesus. Our lesson is replete with Epiphany thoughts. We have here a hymn of praise of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God. Here we have men whose hearts are filled with the glory of this light; men who are willing to go to the utmost if only Christ be glorified. Here we have the glory of God, the glory of Jesus, the glory of the Gospel, light, and brightness, and illumination, and shining, and life, and hope everlasting. And in darkest contrast we have the night of Satan's kingdom and his sinister efforts to deprive man of the light and glory intended for them by God: Satan's wickedness in endeavoring to frustrate the plan of salvation carried out at such costs. And as we see his success, as we view millions of people still in his kingdom, we are constrained to exclaim: Send, O God, Thy light and Thy truth that man may know Thee and whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

Why should we not weary in preaching the glorious Gospel of Christ? 1. If it be hid, it is hid in them that are lost. 2. It is the Gospel of the glory of Christ. 3. It is the Gospel which has given us light. — Man's wisdom is seeking to improve conditions in this world, devising many schemes, advising various reforms. What the world needs, what the Church needs, what our Synod needs, what every individual needs, is the glory of Epiphany. *Why does the world need most of all the glorious Gospel?* 1. Without this Gospel there is only darkness, vv. 2—4 a. 2. With the Gospel comes the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, vv. 4 b—6. — *Oh, send out Thy light and Thy truth!* 1. Make us children of light. 2. Make us bearers of light. — *The Glory of the Gospel.* 1. It proclaims the glory of Him who is the Image of God. 2. It illumines the darkness of men's hearts. 3. It is the only light unto life. (If it is hid, if Satan succeeds in blinding man, man is lost.) — *Preach the Gospel!* 1. Shall we, through our neglect to do mission-work, aid Satan in blinding man's minds? 2. Shall we not rather aid in spreading the only saving light? — Two rulers, two kingdoms, in this world, Jesus and Satan. Only one is the King, and only His is a Kingdom of Glory. However, does it not detract from the glory of Jesus that another god rules in the world? No. *The glory of Jesus magnified by contrast with Satan.* 1. Satan is the god of this world (the wicked ruler of a passing world to be cast out into utter darkness). Jesus is the Image of God (holy, perfect, eternal, etc.). 2. Satan is a wilful murderer; Jesus, the Savior from death. 3. Satan blinds the minds of men; Jesus illuminates them with the light shining to the perfect day. TH. LAETSCH.

Dispositionen über die erste von der Synodalkonferenz angenommene Evangelienreihe.

Neujahr.

Luk. 13, 1—9.

Am Silvesterabend blicken wir rückwärts auf das vergangene Jahr und demütigen uns vor unserm Gott. Heute blicken wir vor allem vorwärts und suchen Kraft und Mut für das kommende Jahr. Aber auch heute darf der Rückwärtsblick nicht fehlen; doch soll die Absicht hauptsächlich sein, aus der Vergangenheit etwas für die Zukunft zu lernen. — Das Gleichnis, das JEsus hier, V. 6—9, erzählt, ist ein trefflicher Text für diesen Zweck. Wir wollen es auf uns selber anwenden; und da ist der Grundgedanke offenbar dieser:

Gott kommt zu uns am Neujahrstag und sucht Frucht.

1. Unser Bekenntnis: Wir sind unfruchtbare Bäume gewesen;
2. unser Gelübde: Wir wollen mit Gottes Hilfe fruchtbare Bäume werden.

1.

1. Wie kam JEsus dazu, dieses Gleichnis zu erzählen? V. 1—5. Offenbar berichtete man dem HErrn diesen Unglücksfall mit dem Hintergedanken: Das müssen aber schlechte Menschen gewesen sein! JEsus sagt: Ja — aber nicht schlechter als ihr. Kümmert euch nicht darum, weshalb diese vor andern von Gottes Gericht getroffen wurden; das ist Gottes Sache, und er wird sich selbst zu rechtfertigen wissen. Wendet ihr das auf euch selber an. Oder seid ihr nicht schuldig? — Das gilt auch uns. Wie kommt's, daß wir noch leben, daß Gott seine schützende Hand über uns gehalten hat, daß wir, wenn wir ehrlich sein wollen, bekennen müssen: Gott hat uns reich gesegnet, im Geistlichen und im Irdischen, während andere diese oder jene Heimsuchung erlitten haben, ja ihr erlegen sind? Sind wir nicht schuldig?

2. Wir müssen uns schämen. Bei solcher Prüfung denkt man gar zu oft nur an Begehungssünden; und wenn man sich da verhältnismäßig frei weiß, hält man den Kopf hoch. Aber dieser Feigenbaum konnte sich brüsten: Ich habe nie schlechte Früchte getragen! — Der HErr redet hier nur von Unterlassungssünden. Das ist Gottes Hauptabsicht: wir sollen Gutes tun. Daß die Zehn Gebote ihrer Form nach Verbote sind, hat seinen Grund nur darin, daß wir so verzweifelt böse sind, immer zur Sünde geneigt, so daß Gott immer erst dem Bösen wehren muß.

3. a. Alles, was wir sind und haben, kommt von Gott (er „hatte" einen Feigenbaum; „gepflanzt"; „in seinem Weinberge"; „Weingärtner"; christliche Eltern; Taufe; christliche Schule und Kirche; treue

Lehrer und Pastoren; eine Synode, die dafür sorgt, daß wir solche Lehrer und Pastoren haben; Religionsfreiheit).

b. Wir nehmen das alles hin, als ob sich das von selber verstünde, ja bilden uns wohl gar etwas darauf ein. Wie viele Menschen, die nicht im Weinberg sind! Und wir sind doch in gleicher Schuld.

c. Mehr: wir sind undankbar gewesen. Wir sind schrecklich ins Holz geschossen, haben mächtige Zweige getrieben, die nur Laub trugen; den irdischen Segen Gottes haben wir zu unnützen, selbstsüchtigen und noch schlechteren Zwecken mißbraucht; in der Kirche haben wir vielfach auf das Äußere gesehen, und das rechte innere Wachstum sowie die rechten Früchte (lautes, weittragendes Zeugnis von Christo, Bau des Reiches Christi) haben gelitten.

d. Selbst das Messer des Weingärtners, das er in den letzten Jahren scharf angesetzt hat, hat vielfach nicht die rechte Wirkung gehabt; wir haben nur die Wunden und den triefenden Saft gesehen, in Selbstmitleid geklagt, aber den rechten Zweck verkannt; und nun, wo die Wunden heilen, ist Gefahr, daß wir in das alte geile Wachsen zurückfallen.

4. Wo liegt der Grund? Wenn ein Feigenbaum unfruchtbar ist, so liegt der Grund tief, in Wurzel und Lebenssaft. Wo gar keine Frucht ist, fehlt das geistliche Leben, der Glaube; wo die Frucht spärlich ist, ist der Glaube klein und schwach. Es ist nötig, daß wir Buße tun und bitten: „HErr, stärke uns den Glauben!“ Luk. 17, 5. — Es kann ja nicht immer so weitergehen. Drei Jahre! Lange hat Gott Geduld gehabt; schließlich wird auch seine Langmut ein Ende haben, und es kommt das Urteil: „Haue ihn ab; was hindert er das Land!“

2.

1. Der HErr hat uns große Gnade erzeigt, indem er so lange Geduld mit uns gehabt hat. Wie alt bist du? Wie oft ist der HErr gekommen und hat Frucht gesucht! Doch hat er uns ein Jahr nach dem andern geschenkt. Das haben wir dem großen Weingärtner zu verdanken, der Fürsprache für uns eingelegt hat.

2. Er schenkt uns heute wieder ein neues Jahr. Es ist ihm eine große Enttäuschung, daß er abermals vergeblich Frucht sucht. Dennoch schneidet er uns heute die Gnadenzeit nicht ab, sondern läßt uns weiter leben; und solange wir leben, heißt es: Lied 223.

3. So soll seine Gnade in diesem Jahr über uns walten. Er kommt nicht zu strafen, wie wir es verdienen; er wird alles, was dahinten liegt, vergeben und vergessen um des guten Weingärtners willen, der immer noch nicht die Hoffnung aufgibt.

4. Er bietet uns aufs neue seine göttliche Hilfe an (V. 8); Wort und Sakrament. In den Gnadenmitteln kommt er selbst zu uns und wirkt mit allem Ernst an unsern Herzen; auch hier kann er sagen: Jes. 5, 4. Wenn's vergeblich ist, so ist es nicht seine Schuld, sondern

unsere („ob er wollte Frucht bringen"; zwar nicht im Urtext, doch im Zusammenhang und V. 34).

5. Wozu soll uns das nun bewegen? Wir hören das schreckliche Wort: V. 9b; das soll uns erschrecken. Vor allem aber sehen wir seine Güte und Gnade; wollen wir uns nicht dadurch zur Buße und zur Besserung bewegen lassen?

Schluß: Das Gleichnis erzählt nicht, ob der Feigenbaum schließlich Frucht getragen hat; absichtlich nicht. Auch bei uns ist die Geschichte noch nicht zu Ende. Für Jerusalem lagen zu der Zeit die drei Jahre besonderer Gnadenzeit dahinten; der HErr machte nun noch einen letzten Versuch; dann kam das Gericht. Jeder Mensch, jedes Volk, jedes Land hat eine besondere Gnadenzeit. — Ein neues Jahr; doch: Lied 229, 6. 7.

Theo. Hoyer.

Sonntag nach Neujahr.

Matth. 9, 9—13.

Daß der HErr JEsus einst Zöllner und Sünder annahm, war nicht nur zu seiner Zeit den Pharisäern und Schriftgelehrten ärgerlich, sondern ist auch heute noch den vernunftstolzen und selbstgerechten Menschen ein anstößiges Ding. Sie sind der Meinung, ein so tugendhafter, heiliger Mann, wie JEsus es gewesen sei, hätte sich von solchen übelberüchtigten, groben Sündern fernhalten sollen. Solche Menschen kennen JEsum nicht als Heiland der Sünder, sondern halten ihn nur für einen weisen Tugendlehrer. Wer Christo auf dem Wege der Tugend folge, sei der Gunst Gottes und des Himmels gewiß — diese Meinung wird heutzutage sogar von vielen Kanzeln herab verkündigt; aber wie irrig und grundverkehrt ist solche Ansicht!

Unser Text zeigt uns, was wir von JEsu und seinem Amte glauben sollen.

JEsus der Freund der Sünder.

1. Er ist gekommen, die Sünder zu suchen und zu sich zu ziehen.
2. Er nimmt alle aufs freundlichste auf, die als Sünder zu ihm kommen.

1.

Beweis aus dem Text. A. Die Berufung des Apostels Matthäus, V. 9. Dieser war ein Zöllner, gehörte zu der Klasse von Leuten, die mit notorischen Sündern, Hurern (Kap. 21, 31), Heiden (Kap. 18, 17), ja selbst mit Mördern, Straßenräubern und dergleichen (auch bei heidnischen Schriftstellern) zusammengestellt wurden. Sie galten als niedrige, habsüchtige, betrügerische, hartherzige Menschen, wurden als aus der Kirchengemeinschaft ausgeschieden betrachtet. JEsus ruft den Zöllner Matthäus zu sich: „Folge mir", V. 9; das heißt: Verlaß dein Zollamt; werde mein Jünger und Apostel. JEsus offenbart sich als der große Sünderfreund, der auch die größten Sünder sucht, zu sich zieht, hoch ehrt.

B. JEsus bezeugt selbst, daß er gekommen ist, die Sünder zu suchen und zu sich zu ziehen. a. Matthäus bereitete in seinem Hause dem HErrn zu Ehren ein Mahl, Luk. 5, 29. Zu diesem Mahle kommen viele Zöllner und Sünder, und mit diesen setzt sich JEsus zu Tisch, weil er der Sünderfreund und -heiland ist, der sie von der Gewalt des Teufels zu sich ziehen will. Die Pharisäer und Schriftgelehrten murren über JEsu Sünderliebe, V. 11. b. JEsus verteidigt sein Tun, V. 12. Das war sein erster Text (Kap. 4, 17) und sein ganzes Wirken: „Tut Buße! Kommt zu mir, eurem Heiland (Kap. 11, 28). Gerade euretwegen, ihr Sünder, bin ich gekommen." Ja, wenn wir Menschen nicht in Sünde gefallen wären, wäre für JEsu Kommen zu uns kein Grund vorhanden. Wäre der erste Adam in der anerschaffenen Gerechtigkeit bestanden, hätte es des zweiten Adams nicht bedurft. Aber die Menschen sind in die Gewalt des Teufels geraten. Darum ist JEsus, der allmächtige Gottessohn, aus unermeßlicher Liebe zu den Sündern Mensch geworden. Er hat in seinem heiligen Leben, bitteren Leiden und Sterben die rechte Arznei wider unsere Sündenkrankheit bereitet, und als der rechte Seelenarzt sucht JEsus nun die Sündenkranken, fordert sie auf zur Umkehr, will sie zu sich ziehen, daß sie seine Arznei hinnehmen, sich von ihm heilen lassen. So kommt JEsus heute noch (Hebr. 13, 8), nicht sichtbar, sondern durch sein Wort, das seine Diener in seinem Namen verkündigen. Sein Ruf zur Buße ergeht auch an uns.

2.

Wie kommt es denn, daß an so vielen sein Rufen und Suchen vergeblich ist?

A. So viele wollen nicht als Sünder zu ihm kommen. Ach, sie halten sich für Gesunde und Gerechte. So die Pharisäer und die Schriftgelehrten. Sie hielten sich für fromm, waren es aber nicht, Luk. 18, 9—12; Matth. 12, 34; 23, 23—33. Sie suchten ihre Gerechtigkeit in sich selbst, in ihren äußerlichen Werken, Opfern, Gebeten, Gottesdiensten, und wußten nicht, daß sie waren elend, jämmerlich, arm, blind und bloß, Offenb. 3, 17. Daher verachteten sie JEsum, den Sünderheiland, stießen sich an ihm und blieben ihm fern. JEsus warnt sie V. 13. Gott fordert von allen Menschen Barmherzigkeit; das ist die rechte Herzensgesinnung gegen den Nächsten. Diese wird geboren aus der rechten Erkenntnis JEsu als des Heilandes. Wo keine rechte Erkenntnis Gottes und des HErrn JEsu ist, ist auch keine wahre Liebe zum Nächsten. An solcher Liebe aber fehlte es den Pharisäern gänzlich, und so waren sie bei aller ihrer vermeintlichen Frömmigkeit grobe Gesetzesübertreter, vor Gott krank zum Tode; aber sie leugneten das beständig und wollten darum von JEsu, dem Sünderfreund und -heiland, nichts wissen.

Diese Warnung haben heute auch viele nötig, selbst viele in der äußeren Christenheit. Solche halten sich auch für gesund und fromm, verlassen sich auf ihr äußerlich ehrbares Leben und meinen, damit vor

Gott bestehen zu können. Dabei fehlt auch ihnen die Liebe zu Gott und zum Nächsten; sie sind stolz und erheben sich über andere, besonders über tiefgefallene Sünder. Christus ist gekommen, nicht die Gerechten, sondern die Sünder zur Buße zu rufen. Mit V. 12 und 13 will JEsus freilich nicht sagen, daß es auf dieser Welt Menschen gäbe, die keiner Buße bedürften. Alle Menschen sind der Buße bedürftig, Röm. 3, 23. Christus ist auch für alle Menschen gekommen, um ihr Arzt und Heiland zu sein. Aber die selbstgerechten Menschen wollen seiner nicht, und so kann er ihnen nicht helfen. Apost. 13, 46.

B. Aufs freundlichste aber nimmt JEsus alle auf, die als Sünder zu ihm kommen, das heißt, die ihr Sündenelend erkennen und auf seinen Ruf hin zu ihm eilen, ihn als ihren einigen Arzt im Glauben annehmen. Er schämt sich auch heute nicht der Sünder, selbst nicht der tiefgefallenen, sondern nimmt alle aufs freundlichste auf. Matth. 11, 28; Joh. 6, 37; Jes. 42, 3. Wie ein Arzt sich freut, wenn Kranke bei ihm Hilfe suchen, so freut sich JEsus, wenn mühselige und beladene Sünder in ihrer Angst und Not bei ihm Hilfe suchen, denn er will der Arzt und Heiland der Sündenkranken sein. (Maria Magdalena, der Schächer am Kreuz.) Wohl allen, die zu ihm eilen und seine Arznei hinnehmen!

Laßt uns zu JEsu eilen wie die Kranken zum Arzt und ihn bitten: Lied 91, 3. 4; und dann laßt uns aus Dankbarkeit für seine große Liebe zu uns Sündern mit heißer Gegenliebe ihm wie Matthäus folgen, V. 9, nach seinem Wort und Willen leben, auch wenn wir deswegen manche irdische Vorteile und Freuden, nach denen das Fleisch sich sehnt, aufgeben und um seinetwillen Spott und Hohn leiden müssen. JEsus wird uns hierzu Kraft geben, Jes. 40, 29. 31. Lied 282, 4. F. H. Eggers.

Epiphanien.

Luk. 4, 16—21.

Das Epiphaniasfest bringt uns die freudige Botschaft: Joh. 1, 14. Davon zeugt auch unser heutiges Evangelium. In der Schule seiner Vaterstadt Nazareth offenbart sich JEsus seinen Zuhörern als den Messias, den verheißenen Heiland der Welt. An der Hand unsers Textes betrachten wir:

JEsu Heilandsherrlichkeit.

Wir sehen

1. die Herrlichkeit seiner Person;
2. die Herrlichkeit seines Werks.

1.

a. Er ist der Gesalbte und Gesandte des HErrn. Er ist kein gewöhnlicher Prophet, sondern er ist der Prophet, der in die Welt kommen sollte, 5 Mos. 18, 15, der Heilige in Israel, Jes. 47, 4. Der Geist Gottes ruht auf ihm, weil er der verheißene Messias ist, der von Gott mit dem Heiligen Geist ohne Maß gesalbt ist, Ps. 45, 8; Jes. 11, 2; 42, 1.

b. JEsus ist Gott und Mensch in einer Person, denn in ihm wohnt die ganze Fülle der Gottheit leibhaftig, Kol. 2, 9. Seit er, der ewige Sohn Gottes, in unbegreiflicher Weise durch den Heiligen Geist von der Jungfrau empfangen wurde, sind in JEsu, dem Marienſohn, die Gottheit und Menschheit unzertrennlich vereinigt. Er, der in Nazareth erzogen wurde und dort seinen Eltern untertan war; derselbe JEsus, der in Nazareth seine Tage als Knabe, Jüngling und junger Mann verlebte und vor aller Augen zunahm an Alter, Weisheit und Gnade: dieſer JEsus ist der wahre Gott selbst, der verheißene Messias, gleichen Wesens mit dem Vater.

c. So zeugt JEsus von sich selbst in unserm Text, wenn er das Wort des Propheten, Jes. 61, 1, auf sich selbst anwendet, V. 21. Dasselbe sagt JEsus auch sonst von sich selbst aus, z. B. Joh. 5, 23; 8, 58; 10, 30; Matth. 18, 20; 28, 18—20. — Der Vater bestätigt dieſes Selbstzeugnis seines Sohnes Ps. 2, 7; Matth. 3, 16. 17; 17, 5; Hebr. 1, 5. — Und der Heilige Geist versiegelt diese Offenbarung, daß JEsus über alles ist, der wahrhaftige Gott und das ewige Leben, der einige Sohn des Vaters, dem Vater gleich an Macht und Ehre Jes. 9, 6; Jer. 23, 6; Micha 5, 1; Joh. 1, 1—3. 18; Phil. 2, 10; Kol. 1, 16. 17; 2, 3; Hebr. 1, 3. 6; 1 Joh. 5, 20.

Ja, JEsus ist wahrhaftiger Mensch und zugleich in ein und derselben Person wahrhaftiger Gott; und selig ist, wer diese Wahrheit gläubig erkennt, denn dieſer Gottmensch ist der Heiland.

2.

In unserm Text zeigt der Heiland aber auch die Herrlichkeit seines Heilandswerks.

a. V. 21. Einmal ist sein Werk das eines Propheten, der das Evangelium dem durch die Sünde geplünderten armen Menschengeschlecht verkündigt. Den armen Menschen, die durch Adams Fall allen ursprünglichen Reichtum der Erkenntnis Gottes sowie ihre anerschaffene Heiligkeit und Gerechtigkeit verloren hatten, bringt JEsus, der Heiland, die selige Kunde, daß er für sie die verlorne Heiligkeit und Gerechtigkeit, Huld und Gnade Gottes als ihr Hoherpriester erworben und die durch die Sünde verdiente Strafe und Verdammnis von ihnen abgewandt hat. Der ganze Inhalt seiner Predigt ist Hilfe und Rettung für alle Sünder von allen Sünden, vom Zorn Gottes, vom Tod und der Gewalt des Teufels einerseits und das Anbieten und Darreichen allen Reichtums an Gerechtigkeit, Gnade Gottes, Kindschaft Gottes und des ewigen Lebens andererseits, V. 18. 19.

b. Das Werk, das der Heiland als Hoherpriester zur Erlösung der Menschen vollbracht hat und das er als der Prophet den Sündern verkündigt, wird nun näher im zweiten Teil des 18. Verses beschrieben. JEsus hat die zum Tode verwundeten Herzen geheilt; er hat die sündigen Menschen von den Ketten der Sünde und der Sklaverei befreit;

er hat ihren blinden Herzen das Licht gebracht, daß er durch sein Leiden und Sterben sie erlöst, erworben und gewonnen hat von allen ihren Feinden. Also die wunderbare Erlösung, die der Heiland vollbracht hat, verkündigt er den Menschen, teilt ihnen seine Heilung und Rettung mit und eignet sie ihnen zu. Allen Mühseligen und Beladenen bringt er durch die Predigt des Evangeliums die Rettung und Heilung, die er für alle Menschen erworben hat.

c. V. 19. Vgl. 3 Mos. 25, 10. Der Heiland predigt das angenehme Jahr des HErrn. Er verkündigt uns Freiheit von aller Not. Das Jubeljahr des Volkes Gottes im Alten Testament war ein Vorbild des eigentlichen und vollkommenen Jubeljahrs, das Christus seinem Volk des Neuen Testaments bringt. Denn nicht nur auf ein gewöhnliches Jahr, sondern für unser ganzes Leben hat Christus, unser Heiland und Hoherpriester, uns frei gemacht von aller Knechtschaft der Sünde und des Teufels, uns versetzt in sein Reich der Gnade und uns in den vollen Besitz aller durch die Sünde verlornen Güter gesetzt. Und als unser König wird er uns in dieser Freiheit vor allen unsern Feinden beschützen, bis er uns endlich eingeführt hat in die vollkommene Seligkeit des Himmels. Die ganze Zeit des Neuen Testaments ist somit das angenehme Jahr des HErrn, das dann sich verwandeln wird in selige Ewigkeit.

Wohl uns, wenn wir nun nicht nur mit neugieriger Spannung auf JEsu Predigt des Evangeliums hören, wie es der Fall war bei vielen seiner Zuhörer in Nazareth, V. 20, sondern auch auf ihn schauen mit den Augen des Glaubens und in ihm sehen unsern herrlichen Heiland!

F. J. Lankenau.

Erster Sonntag nach Epiphanien.

Joh. 6, 28—40.

Im Evangelium des heutigen Sonntags, vom zwölfjährigen JEsus im Tempel, sehen wir, wie der Heiland die Menschen an sich zieht. Er war damals nur ein Knabe, aber die Lehrer hörten ihn gerne. In seinem späteren Leben hielten sich viele Menschen zu ihm, wenn er auch von andern verspottet und verschmäht wurde. Auch wir sind seine Nachfolger; wir glauben an ihn, freuen und trösten uns seiner. Wir wollen nicht von ihm weichen. Wir erhalten von Christo viel Gutes. Und weil unser Text gerade hiervon handelt, so wollen wir die Frage beantworten:

Was haben wir an Christo?

1. Daß wir nicht hungern, sondern gesättigt werden;
2. daß wir nicht hinausgestoßen, sondern freundlich aufgenommen werden;
3. daß wir nicht verlorengehen, sondern ewig selig werden.

1.

Der HErr hatte dem jüdischen Volk eine Predigt gehalten und gesagt, was für Werke sie wirken sollten. Darauf fragten sie: V. 28. JEsus antwortete: V. 29; sie sollten an ihn glauben. Da fragten sie: V. 30. Das war eine unverschämte Frage. Er hatte eben die Fünftausend gespeist. Was wollen die Leute? Sie verraten es gleich: V. 31. Sie wollen sagen: Du hast wohl fünftausend gespeist, aber unser Moses, dem wir anhangen, hat fortwährend Speise geliefert. So sollst du es auch machen; dann wollen wir glauben. Darauf entgegnet JEsus: V. 32. Es war nicht Moses, sondern der Vater, und der gibt euch das rechte Brot. Ich bin das rechte Brot; wer mich hat, den hungert nicht, sondern er wird gesättigt. Das sagte JEsus den Juden, und das gilt auch uns. Das ist's, was wir an Christo haben.

Haben wir das nicht alle erfahren? Wir haben viele Bedürfnisse, die wir befriedigen wollen. Den Christen sind aber die geistlichen Bedürfnisse die wichtigsten. Wir wollen die Vergebung der Sünden, ein ruhiges Gewissen, Frieden mit Gott und die Kraft, fromm zu leben. Wir streben ernstlich nach solchen geistlichen Gütern. Es ist dem Christen nicht einerlei, ob er sie hat. Er hat Hunger danach. Und wenn der Christ diese geistlichen Güter besitzt, so ist er froh und vollkommen gesättigt. Und diese Güter haben wir von Christo. Vgl. 2 Kor. 5, 19; 1 Joh. 1, 7; Röm. 5, 1; Hebr. 8, 14; Röm. 6, 3. 4. Wenn wir diese Güter haben, ist unser Seelenhunger gestillt, und wir sind gesättigt. Lied 249, 9.

Aber der HErr befriedigt auch unsere irdischen Bedürfnisse. Er hat die Fünftausend gesättigt und hat vielen in leiblichen Nöten geholfen. Er schenkt uns auch jetzt noch, was wir bedürfen. Unsere Gebete finden durch Christum ihre Erhörung, Joh. 16, 23. Und wenn es einmal irgendwo mangelt, wenn Not oder Kummer über uns hereinbricht, so sind wir doch seiner endlichen Hilfe gewiß. Schenkt Gott uns die großen Gaben, so wird er die kleinen uns nicht vorenthalten, Röm. 8, 32. Nie hungert die, die an Christum glauben, weder im Geistlichen noch im Leiblichen; sie werden vollkommen gesättigt.

2.

V. 37. Daran hatten die Juden nie gedacht, daß der Vater die Herzen zu JEsu führt. Sie meinten, wie die Menschen überhaupt denken, daß es bei jedem selbst liege, ob er an Christum gläubig werde. Doch es steht anders. Der Vater führt die Herzen durch Wort und Sakrament zu JEsu. Daß der Mensch bekehrt wird, ist Gottes Werk, Eph. 2, 8; 2 Tim. 1, 9. Und nun sagt JEsus, er werde solche, die durch die Wirkung der Gnadenmittel zu ihm kommen, nicht hinausstoßen, sondern freundlich aufnehmen. Ganz andere Erfahrungen macht man sonst im Leben. Man braucht Hilfe, oder man hat sich etwas zuschulden kommen lassen, oder man sucht Hilfe oder Vergebung, wird aber oft schroff abgewiesen. Doch JEsus nimmt uns auf. Vgl. Matth. 11, 28;

Mark. 10, 14. Das haben viele erfahren: Maria Magdalena, Petrus, Zachäus. Wir erfahren es immer wieder, wenn wir in Sünde fallen und bußfertig zu JEsu kommen. Er nimmt uns freundlich auf und tröstet uns durch Absolution und Abendmahl. Lied 222, 1.

3.

V. 39. 40. Leider ist es wahr, daß viele verlorengehen. Sie leben in Sünden und glauben nicht an JEsum, verachten Wort und Sakrament und merken nicht auf Gottes Drohungen. Solche kommen in die ewige Verdammnis, Mark. 16, 16; Jes. 66, 24.

Müssen wir nicht dasselbe befürchten? Wir sind doch Sünder und haben Strafe verdient. Aber das haben wir an Christo, daß wir nicht verlorengehen, sondern ewig selig werden, V. 40. Gleich nach dem Tode, Luk. 23, 43; Offenb. 14, 13. Ganz sicher, 2 Tim. 1, 12; Röm. 8, 38. 39. Der Ausblick auf diese Seligkeit ist so freudenvoll, daß wir schon hier beten: Lied 443, 1.

Und wenn der Jüngste Tag kommt, wird JEsus die Seinen auferwecken, V. 39. Wohl werden alle Toten auferstehen; aber dem Christen ist es tröstlich, daß gerade der Heiland ihn auferwecken wird. Wenn eine Menge arbeitsloser Männer auf einen Ruf zur Arbeit wartet und der Fabrikbesitzer selbst zu einem besonders hintritt und ihn ruft, so bedeutet das gewiß viel für den Mann. Und hier heißt es: Ich will euch auferwecken.

Das alles haben wir an Christo. Darum sagen wir: Lied 254, 1.

F. Niedner.

Zweiter Sonntag nach Epiphanien.

Matth. 12, 46—50.

Ohne Glauben ist's unmöglich Gott gefallen, Hebr. 11, 6. Das ist der Gedanke, der sich durch die ganze Schrift hinzieht. Gott, bei dem kein Ansehen der Person ist, nimmt nicht Rücksicht auf Äußerlichkeiten, auf Reichtum, Bildung, Ehrenstellungen, Abstammung, Rasse usw., kurz, auf solche Dinge, die bei Menschen etwas gelten, wodurch Menschen sich in dem Urteil über andere nur zu häufig leiten lassen. Bei Gott gilt allein das, daß einer an Christum glaubt. So lesen wir Röm. 2, 28. 29 und damit in innigem Zusammenhang Röm. 3, 24—4, 5. In unserm Text wendet Christus diesen Grundsatz auf leibliche Verwandtschaft an.

Worauf kommt es in unserm Verhältnis zu Christo hauptsächlich an?

1. Nicht auf äußere Blutsverwandtschaft;
2. sondern darauf, daß wir im Glauben mit ihm vereint sind.

1.

V. 46. 47. Nach Mark. 3, 31 schickten sie zu ihm, der inmitten des Volkes stand und lehrte, und ließen ihn rufen. Sowohl sie selber als der Bote werden erwartet haben, daß er alsbald dem Ruf seiner Ver-

wandten, sonderlich seiner Mutter, folgen werde. Jedoch JEsus sagte: V. 48 Das galt ihm, das galt seinen Verwandten, das galt allen. Das ist auch für uns eine wichtige Lehre. Er war dabei, das Werk auszuführen, das ihm sein Vater aufgetragen hatte. Da gelten keine Rücksichten auf Verwandte. Was JEsus schon im Tempel seiner Mutter zu Gemüte geführt hatte, Luk. 2, 49, was er bei der Hochzeit wiederholt hatte, Joh. 2, 4, was er der Mutter der Söhne Zebedäi sagen mußte, Matth. 20, 20 ff., das bringt er auch hier zum Ausdruck: wenn es das Werk Gottes gilt, dann kennt Christus keine Rücksichten auf Verwandte. In sein eigentliches Werk läßt er sich nicht dreinreden, davon läßt er sich nicht abhalten, darüber hat ihm niemand etwas zu sagen und befehlen, selbst seine nächsten Verwandten nicht. Wenn daher die römische Kirche als ein Argument für die Mittlerschaft der Maria ihren Einfluß als Mutter auf den Sohn geltend machen will, so ist das einmal gegen alle Vernunft. Ein Beamter darf sich in seinen Amtswerken nicht von Verwandtschaftsrücksichten leiten und beeinflussen lassen; er würde sich dadurch einer schweren Treulosigkeit schuldig machen. Aber Roms Argument ist zum andern auch gegen Christi klares Wort, worin sich Christus immer wieder gegen alle und jede Einmischung der Verwandten in sein Werk verwahrt. Gerade durch dieses Argument beweist sich Rom als antichristisch, indem es das gerade Gegenteil von Christi Wort lehrt. Wenn Nachfolger Roms sich an Maria als Fürbitterin wenden, dann bauen sie auf trügerischen Sand.

Auch wir wollen uns in Sachen des Christentums, des Glaubens, der Lehre, des Lebens nicht durch Rücksichten auf Verwandte leiten lassen. Wie mancher hat dadurch schon am Glauben Schiffbruch, wenigstens großen Schaden gelitten! Hier gilt auch uns Matth. 8, 21; 10, 36. 37; Luk. 14, 26. Folgen wir hier dem Beispiel Christi!

2.

Nicht leibliche Verwandtschaft gibt das Recht der Bruderschaft, sondern allein der Glaube. V. 49. 50. Was ist der Wille des Vaters? Das sagt JEsus mit ausdrücklichen Worten, Joh. 6, 40; das geht aus allen Sprüchen hervor, die von dem Zweck der Sendung JEsu reden, Joh. 3, 16; Matth. 20, 28; 11, 25—30 usw. Allein der Glaube erkennt in JEsu den von Gott gesandten Heiland; allein der Glaube tut also den Willen Gottes, seinen Sohn als Heiland anzuerkennen. Durch diesen Glauben werden wir mit JEsu vereint, inniger noch als selbst durch die Bande der Verwandtschaft. Denn nicht Blutsverwandtschaft, sondern der Glaube ist es, dem Christus das Recht der Bruderschaft zuspricht. Ja, ohne Glauben ist selbst Blutsverwandtschaft von keinem Nutzen, Joh. 7, 5 ff. Ohne Unterschied der Person und des Standes sind alle Gläubigen ihm Bruder, Schwester, Mutter. Welch hohe Ehre, welch herrliches Vorrecht! Der nun im Himmel sitzt, sagt dir, wer du auch sein magst: Du bist mir so innig verbunden, wie Mutter und Bruder; du bist mir so lieb, wie meine nächsten Verwandten es sein können; du

bist mein nächster, allernächster Verwandter! Komm nur getrost zu mir, ohne Furcht, ohne Scheu; wie ein Sohn mit seiner Mutter, wie ein Bruder zum Bruder redet, so darfst du mir alles sagen. Vgl. Hebr. 2, 14—18. Lied 39, 11—13.

Auch in solcher Liebe zu den Gläubigen sollen wir dem Heiland nachfolgen. Sagt er doch selber: Mark. 10, 29. 30. Darin liegt doch, daß seine Christen einander lieben sollen wie Brüder, Eltern usw., Gal. 6, 10. Geschieht das immer unter uns Christen? Wie kalt und gleichgültig gehen wir oft an unserm Mitchristen vorbei, ohne uns um ihn, um seine Nöte, seine Sorgen, seine Freuden, zu kümmern! Er geht uns so gut wie gar nichts an. In der Kirche grüßen wir ihn vielleicht; damit ist es abgetan. Christus schämt sich nicht, ihn als seinen Bruder anzuerkennen, und wir, die wir Christi Brüder sein wollen, was tun wir? Schämen wir uns! Bitten wir den Heiland um Vergebung. Folgen wir in seiner Kraft seinem Beispiel. Theo. Lätsch.

Dritter Sonntag nach Epiphanien.

Luk. 4, 38—44.

V. 37. JEsus war eine bekannte Persönlichkeit. Gegenstand des Gesprächs in den jüdischen Ländern, V. 36. Seine Wundertaten, besonders seine Macht über die bösen Geister, erregten gewaltiges Aufsehen.

Und doch hatte er nur wenige Anhänger. Nur wenige sahen seine Herrlichkeit, die Heilandsherrlichkeit.

Ähnlich heute. Von JEsu Christo wird viel geredet und geschrieben. Er wird in allen Tonarten gepriesen. Doch das Beste wird übersehen oder geradezu verworfen, seine Heilandsherrlichkeit. Und damit verliert man das Heil, gibt den Leuten Steine statt Brot, Tod statt Leben trotz aller Lobpreisungen JEsu. Daß wir doch nicht in denselben verhängnisvollen Irrtum fallen!

Was ist für uns die eigentliche Herrlichkeit JEsu?

1. Nicht sowohl, daß er solch große Wunder getan,
2. sondern vielmehr, daß er uns das Heil gebracht hat.

1.

V. 38—44. Hier wird von einer langen Reihe von Wundern berichtet. Simons Schwiegermutter heilt JEsus von einem bösen Fieber. Noch nach Sonnenuntergang kommen die Leute in Scharen zu ihm mit ihren Kranken. Und er macht sie alle gesund. Man bringt auch viele Besessene, von denen er die Teufel austreibt. Und als diese Teufel anfangen zu schreien: „Du bist Christus“ usw., da schließt er ihnen den Mund. Von den unsauberen Geistern will er kein Zeugnis haben, wobei es ja doch nur auf Irreführung des Volkes abgesehen war.

Das sind alles große, herrliche Wunderwerke. JEsus Christus ist auch im Stande der Erniedrigung der allmächtige Gott, der, wann und wo er will, die Gesetze der Natur durchbrechen, der selbst die mächtigen Geister der Finsternis zum Gehorsam zwingen kann. V. 42. Das Volk wollte nicht von ihm lassen. Unter einem solchen König müßte es sich fein leben lassen. Hilfe aus leiblicher Not, irdisches Wohlbehagen genügte diesem Volk. JEsus war ihnen lieb und wert, bloß weil er ihre Kranken heilte und ihnen Brot verschaffte.

Das ist das soziale Evangelium der heutigen sogenannten christlichen Welt. JEsus und das, was man JEsu Lehre nennt, soll Glück und Wohlsein für dieses Leben bringen, soll die Kriege bannen, einen dauernden Friedenszustand zwischen den Völkern bringen. Nach dieser Leute Meinung hat das Christentum versagt, weil es den Weltkrieg nicht verhütet hat. JEsus soll eben nationales und soziales Elend mildern und gänzlich beseitigen. Auch uns Christen kommen wohl ähnliche Gedanken, wenn das Kreuz uns zum Anstoß werden will. Man wird ein wenig irre an JEsu, wenn in der Not nicht sofort die Hilfe kommt. Die Ursache ist, daß man die eigentliche Herrlichkeit JEsu aus den Augen läßt. Das war der große, verhängnisvolle Fehler der Juden damals; das ist der große, verhängnisvolle Fehler bei vielen auch heute. Nein, für uns ist die eigentliche Herrlichkeit JEsu nicht, daß er so große Wunder getan, sondern daß er uns das Heil gebracht hat.

2.

V. 43. Das ist sein eigentliches Amt, der Zweck seiner Sendung auf Erden, das Evangelium vom Reich Gottes zu verkündigen. Das ist die frohe Botschaft von der Gnade Gottes gegen uns Sünder. Gott hat sich über die verlorne Menschheit erbarmt, hat seinen eingebornen Sohn gesandt, daß er ihre Sünden auf sich nehme und dafür genugtue. Stellvertretung. Das hat er getan, hat alles vollbracht. Nun ist das Heil bereitet für alle. Nun kann in der Welt das Evangelium vom Reich Gottes verkündigt werden: Kommt her, laßt euch versöhnen mit Gott! Und wer dieses Heil im Glauben ergreift, der ist im Reich Gottes hier und einst im Himmel. Und das ist das Beste, was uns armen Sündern gesagt werden kann.

Erlösung aus leiblichem Elend ist wohl ganz angenehm, aber schließlich nicht unentbehrlich. Dagegen Erlösung aus Sündennot, Todesangst und Verdammnis, Friede für geängstete Gewissen, Trost für gebrochene Herzen, Ruhe für zitternde Seelen, Hoffnung für verzweifelte Gemüter, das ist unendlich herrlicher. Das ist das eine, was wirklich not, unentbehrlich ist. Das hat uns JEsus gebracht. Damit löst er die Fesseln Satans, macht geistlich Blinde sehend, geistlich Lahme gehend, geistlich Tote lebendig. Ja, dadurch wird das Reich Gottes gebaut usw. Und daß uns JEsus Christus das gebracht hat, das ist uns seine eigentliche Herrlichkeit. Stimmst du dem bei? Gewiß doch.

H. J. Bouman.

Miscellanea.

Neue Forschungen über das Wort Moloch.

Dies Wort, das an sieben Stellen des Alten Testaments vorkommt, ist bisher allgemein von einem Götzenbild verstanden worden, das in vieler Hinsicht der Kronosstatue von Karthago ähnlich gewesen sein soll. So wird Moloch auch in allen jetzt gebräuchlichen Nachschlagewerken geschildert.

Kürzlich hat aber Prof. Dr. Otto Eißfeldt-Halle eingehende Forschungen veranstaltet, die er in Heft 3, 1935, „Beiträge zur Religionsgeschichte des Altertums", und in Jahrgang 11, „Forschungen und Fortschritte", S. 285 f., veröffentlicht hat. In letzterem Artikel lesen wir unter anderm: „Aber von dem Worte mole = ‚Gelübde' muß noch etwas ausführlicher die Rede sein. Das Wort findet sich, wie schon Chabot gezeigt hat, auch in zwei punischen Inschriften aus vorrömischer Zeit, wo man die Konsonanten mlk — nur die Konsonanten werden ja im Punischen geschrieben — bisher als malk oder milk, ‚König', erklärt hat. Aber man muß noch über Chabot hinausgehen; in einer ganzen Reihe anderer Fälle weist sich das bisher als ‚König' verstandene mlk punischer Inschriften vielmehr als molk, ‚Gelübde', aus und ermöglicht so bei manchen auch jetzt noch bleibenden Undurchsichtigkeiten eine bessere Erklärung dieser Inschriften. — Wichtiger noch ist, daß von hier aus auch das molek des Alten Testaments in eine neue Beleuchtung tritt. Zunächst zeigt sich, daß die überlieferte Vokalisation molek ganz richtig ist. Vor allem aber wird klar, daß die vor diesem Wort stehende Präposition le so, nicht la (= le mit Artikel), zu lesen ist, die ein Dativzeichen sein und ‚an', ‚für' usw. bedeuten kann, hier wie in andern ganz eindeutigen Fällen, etwa 1 Mos. 22, 2, vielmehr ‚als' bedeutet, daß die betreffenden Wendungen also mit ‚als Molek (= Gelübdeopfer) weihen oder geben' und nicht etwa mit ‚dem Molek weihen oder geben' zu übersetzen sind. Damit verschwindet der angebliche Gott Moloch aus der Geschichte. Die hier in Betracht kommenden Kinderopfer sind vielmehr Jahve dargebracht worden, und erst sekundär — offenbar zu erklären aus dem Bestreben der jüdischen Schriftgelehrten, ihren Gott von einem derartigen Opfer zu befreien — ist der Opferbegriff ‚Molek' in den Namen eines Götzen umgedeutet worden."

So interessant diese Ausführungen an und für sich sind, so bedarf die Frage doch noch weiterer Untersuchungen, zumal der Name Apost. 7, 43, wie es scheint, von einem Götzen gebraucht wird. Auf jeden Fall ist die philologische Untersuchung anregend. P. E. K.

Christ's Descent into Hell and the Nicene Creed.

The question has been asked why the Creed of Nicaea has no reference to Christ's descent into hell. The question seems rather important, since one usually regards the Apostolic Creed as being more ancient than the Nicene. But as a matter of fact the Nicene Creed is the earliest complete creed of the Christian Church. It is true that the baptismal confession as it was in use in various parts of the Church contained a nucleus of the Apostolic Creed and even many individual phrases. But the old Roman Confession does not contain a reference to the descent, nor does that of

Southern Gaul. The confession of Cyprian concerns only the Trinity, the forgiveness of sins, and the life everlasting. The confession of Origen also omits any reference to the descent. The same is true with regard to Lucian of Antioch and Eusebius of Caesarea. Even after the date of Nicaea we find no reference to this doctrine, for example, not in Cyril of Jerusalem, not in the *Apostolic Constitutions* nor in the confessions of Marcellus of Ancyra in Galatia and of Rufinus of Aquileia, in Italy.

As a matter of fact, this doctrine was in no way in dispute at this time, and that is evidently the reason why the Nicene Creed did not include the statement. But the final form of the Apostolic Creed, as generally accepted about 460 A. D., at the time of Bishop Faustus of Reji, contained the words "He descended into hell," and the Church has since used this confession with a direct reference to Christ's descent. P. E. K.

1 Cor. 3, 12—15.

In the third chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul speaks of factions and divisions among the Corinthians, brought about by the too human element of personal likes and dislikes, of loyalty to a particular teacher like Apollos or Paul. He warns them against this carnal tendency of theirs, v. 3. They should not say, "I belong to Apollos," or, "I belong to Paul." Both Apollos and Paul belong to them. All things belong to them, v. 21, Paul, Apollos, Peter, the world, life, death, the present and the future, everything. But they belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

Of course the human element does come in. God uses human beings to preach His Gospel. Thus Paul, too, preached. He laid the foundation, and other human beings will preach after he is gone and build on the foundation that he has laid. But let every one take care how he preaches; for no one can lay any other foundation than that which is laid, namely, Jesus Christ. The builders of the future are not to change anything in the fundamental design, either by adding to the foundation or taking away a part of it, but stick to the outline which by the grace of God the wise master builder gave them. After the foundation to a building has been laid, it is not possible to deviate from it to the right or to the left without changing the foundation, but one can only build on top of it. That is obvious. Thus we are not to deviate either to the right or to the left from the doctrine of Jesus Christ which Paul, by the grace of God a wise master builder, has laid down so surely, so clearly, so completely, and so well, but only to build on it, on top of it.

Still the human element continues. The Church is built up by different kinds of preachers, who should nevertheless all confine themselves to the doctrine which Paul has laid down. Some, while preaching the correct doctrine, manifest a great deal of oratorical and other personal abilities. It may be that Apollos was of that sort. Others may possess great ability in advertising and organizing. Some may possess the gift of poetry and write hymns for all the Church to sing. Some voices may be feeble and their sermons dry as dust, wood, hay, stubble, with which not much that is lasting will be built. There are various methods of doing mission-work, for instance, some that produce lasting results and others

having results that are not so lasting, though the missionaries in question may agree in doctrine. Luther, we might say, did not, in building, use much straw, but chiefly gold and precious stones, though many of his successors may use somewhat wooden material. Time will tell, and Judgment Day will reveal everything. That does not mean that these straw-builders will not be saved, — for they believe in Christ, — but that which they built with the straw of their human strength (supposedly) and human weaknesses will be lost. All those who believed in the Christ they preached will be saved, but not those who were attracted solely by other things. The latter will disappear not only on Judgment Day, but also in time of tribulation.

This passage refers directly neither to heretics nor to the heterodox. We know that there are believers wherever Christ is preached, even if it be by heretics or the heterodox. To include them, however, it would be necessary to use a different illustration. Paul is not concerned with them here, or he would have employed different imagery. He is concerned only with those who build on the foundation which he has laid down, not with those who preach a doctrine which runs counter to his, whether it be the doctrine of Holy Communion or of predestination. Illustrations of this kind are difficult, and it is usually impossible to get everything into them. The heterodox do not fit in anywhere in this picture. What they teach, in so far as it is heterodox, is not built on the foundation, but away from it. It is not only useless, it runs counter to Scripture and is dangerous. Paul refers here only to the worthless and useless human element in our efforts to build the kingdom of God *on the true doctrine.* Apollos was not heterodox, nor were his partisans in Corinth. But all that the partisan spirit was building up in Corinth was wood, straw, stubble. Therefore Paul warns against it, not against any false doctrine that was being preached. The same warning applies to any partisan spirit and exaggerated pride in any church-body, to ballyhoo methods, etc. Against false doctrine Paul would have warned in an altogether different way, as is abundantly clear from his writings.

This passage therefore has no bearing on the problem of Christian fellowship with heterodox, either for or against. The partisan spirit against which Paul here warns, this glorying in men and in human strength, is no doubt one of the factors which have contributed to the sorry condition of the Church to-day with its multitudinous sects, but must not be confused with the rejection of clearly revealed doctrines of the Holy Scriptures which meets us in the message of false teachers.

KURT ZORN.

Women Canvassers.

The *Workers Manual* gives this definition: "The annual Every-member Canvass is a Scriptural plan, employed by many congregations of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, whereby congregations of our Synod each year, through a house-to-house, member-to-member, canvass, seek to provide funds to meet the financial needs for the home congregation and for the work of the Synod at large." Representatives carefully chosen from the rank and file of the whole congregation endeavor to secure subscriptions for the work of the Church. The question has been

asked, May such canvassers be women? The question implies the possibility that the restrictions which the Bible places upon women's activities in the Church may pertain to such canvassers.

Scripture teaches woman's subordination to man, *e. g.*, 1 Cor. 11, 3—9; Eph. 5, 22—24; 1 Pet. 3, 1. 5. 6. On this we are agreed.

A manner of subordination St. Paul teaches 1 Cor. 14, 34. 35 and 1 Tim. 2,11.12. St. Paul here says: "Let your women keep silence in the churches." In the Timothy passage the word *church* is not used. While it is generally conceded that the apostle also here is speaking of women's silence in the Church, we say to those not so ready to admit this that the passage in 1 Cor. 14 supplements the Timothy passage. The apostle certainly does not mean to say that women must always be silent; he does, however, mention an occasion when they should be silent, namely, in the church. We are not discussing woman suffrage in general; our question is, What does the apostle mean when he says: Women shall be silent in the church?

What does *λαλεῖν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ*, to speak in the church, mean? The nature of the letter, as also the context, shows that St. Paul here does not use the word *ekklesia* in the general sense of gathering, or assembly, secular or otherwise; nor does he mean the communion of saints, the one holy Christian Church, since that would enjoin silence upon the woman every time two or three believers are gathered together. In the latter sense he could not use the plural *ἐκκλησίαις*. Evidently he means, and only can mean, the gathering, the assembly, of the congregation. From sources at hand we refer to the following who take St. Paul here to mean the public assembly of the congregation: G. Stoeckhardt, Conc. Theol. Monthly, V, 766 ff.; F. Pieper, *Dogmatik*, I, 639; P. E. Kretzmann, *Pop. Com.;* Bengel, *Gnomon;* Starke, *Synopsis; Weimarer Bibel;* Charles Hodge on the passages in question.

The public speaking and teaching in the congregation, in the presence of men, is forbidden. If a woman canvasser goes from house to house soliciting subscriptions for the work of the Church, there encounters a man or a group of men, and finds it necessary to explain or admonish, such speaking is not done in the church and therefore is permissible.

However, there is another phase. In his capacity as chairman of an elaborate committee the canvasser may have to appear before the voters' meeting or the entire congregation to advise, explain, or report. In that capacity or in any similar position on the committee which would bring her before the congregation as the teacher of men the woman canvasser would be out of place.

The answer to our question, according to Scripture, then, is: A woman may be a canvasser if and inasmuch as her assignment does not place her in a position where she has to speak before the congregation or a representative part thereof in the capacity of teacher.

The congregation which finds it feasible to delegate women with the restriction given above does not violate a Scriptural principle.

This is not an open question, since the apostle says: "They are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law."

Ortonville, Minn. Wm. H. Hartman.

Theological Observer. — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches.

I. Amerika.

Lutheran Union and Verbal Inspiration. — The *Lutheran Herald* (Norwegian Lutheran Church of America) says editorially (June 11, 1935): "The April number of the *Lutheran Theological Quarterly*, published by the theological faculties of Gettysburg and Mount Airy [U. L. C.], contains two articles on the inspiration of the Bible under the captions 'The Bible — the Word of God?' by Dr. John Aberly of Gettysburg, and 'The Formal Principle of the Reformation,' by Dr. A. E. Deitz. Both articles raise the question as to the inerrancy of the Bible and indirectly reject verbal inspiration. . . . However carefully guarded these two contributions may be, the consequences, as far as we are able to understand, will be to discredit the old inspiration teachings of the Lutheran Church and open the door to doubts and questions as to the reliability of the Bible. The writers evidently believe that by rejecting the rigid verbal inspiration theory and giving some leeway to critics and objectors they protect the great central truth of the Bible and 'shorten our defenses.' [Cp. CONC. THEOL. MON., 1935, pp. 538. 832.] . . . Luther made it a rule to test all teachings by the Scriptures and the central truth of the Bible, justification by faith. These two facts have been called the formal and the material principle of the Reformation. They have been considered the fundamentals of Lutheran teaching. . . . We have been taught to depend absolutely upon the written Word of God. Can this be depended upon? Is it inerrant? Is it the Word of God, or is there mixed into the Bible the fallible words of men? Does it only *contain* the Word of God, or *is* it the Word of God? . . . Our Confessions took it for granted that the Bible is the Word of God and speak about the 'Scripture of the Holy Ghost.' The constitution of the former General Council states that the Scriptures are 'inerrant in letter, fact, and doctrine.' Dr. Th. E. Schmauck, president of the former General Council, Dr. George W. Sandt, for many years editor of the *Lutheran*, believed in verbal inspiration. The late Dr. Joseph Stump, president of the Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary of the U. L. C. A., writes: 'The words themselves must be regarded as inspired words, and the exact shades of meaning in the original words are often a matter of the utmost importance in deciding questions of doctrine and life. In 1 Cor. 2, 13 Paul expressly claims for himself a verbal inspiration.' We see no difficulty in adopting the verbal inspiration. If the Bible is inspired, this inspiration must apply to the words which express the thoughts. We are afraid of any theories which raise questions as to the inerrancy of the Bible. It has worked havoc in many churches. *Vestigia terrent*, which means: 'The footsteps frighten me,' said the fox, as he saw that there were no footsteps backward from the lion's lair." E.

Unionism kat' Exochen. — You have read the item with this caption in the December, 1935, issue of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY. Please read it again. Then read the following, taken from the same article by E. Stanley Jones, entitled "Christians of America, Unite": "What would be the result of this plan of unity if put into operation? . . . 2. What is

good in each branch would be preserved, frankly and honestly. . . . The Friends, in insisting upon 'the inner light'; the Baptists, upon democracy in faith and practise; the Presbyterians, on the sovereignty of God; the Episcopalians, on the continuity of the body of Christ; the Methodists, on personal experience; the Lutherans, on justification by faith, — these and others have something to preserve and something to give to the rest of us. We would recognize that treasure and share it." (*The Christian Century*, October 2, 1935.) *The Christian Century* of October 16 publishes, with other letters of similar import, this communication: "Editor, the *Christian Century:* Sir: Stanley Jones's advice, 'Christians of America, Unite,' strikes me as the plainest kind of common sense. I vote for the plan as it stands. M. Willard Lampe, School of Religion, Iowa City." We vote against the plan, first, because Scripture forbids it and then also because common sense forbids it. E. Stanley Jones has been uttering nonsense. The Friends and the Presbyterians, etc., cannot take over the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith and still retain their distinctive doctrines. The Lutherans cannot take over "the inner light" of the Friends and the Presbyterian teaching on "the sovereignty of God" and still retain justification by faith. If the Friends accept our doctrine on justification, they will have to accept all that goes with it. They must accept justification as offered and conveyed to men in the Gospel, not by means of "the inner light." And does Dr. Jones know what sort of justification "the inner light" of the Friends teaches? It is a justification by works. So, then, according to Dr. Jones's plan of union the Lutherans of the united Church will teach a justification by works and the Friends of the united Church will teach a justification by faith; for they have exchanged their respective doctrines. Has the situation been bettered? Again, in Lutheran theology justification by faith is the central doctrine; in Presbyterian theology the "sovereignty of God" is put in the center and molds all other doctrines. We cannot accept the material principle of Calvinism and still retain the material principle of Lutheranism. In other words we are asked by Dr. Jones to remain good Lutherans, teaching the universality of grace, and to become good Calvinists, insisting on the particular grace that, together with the eternal decree of reprobation, is a corollary of the "sovereignty of God." That does not make sense. — The article we are discussing is an elaboration of the plan of union which Dr. Jones has proposed in his latest book, *Christ's Alternative to Communism.* He says there, on pages 219 f.: "We should say to each denomination: 'We do not want you to give up your special truth; we want you to give it to the rest of us,'" and then goes on to tell how in a religious meeting he, the Methodist (Arminian), had emphasized God's side in conversion and the Presbyterian speaker had emphasized man's side in conversion, and, lo, "the battle was over. We had taken each other's truth and were the better for it." As an Arminian he used to abhor the teaching of the Presbyterians that God does all in conversion. But now, in the united Church, he has taken over the other man's truth. But he is still keeping the best of Arminianism — man contributes much towards his conversion. So the unionist *kat' exochen* is able to accept both statements as true: God does all, and God does not do all. Professor Lampe says: "That strikes me as the plainest kind of common sense." (Cp. Conc. Theol. Mon., 1935, p. 621.) E.

An Important Declaration. — From the official *Proceedings of the Twenty-third Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States*, held at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., August 7—13, 1935, we reprint the following "Reply to the Overtures of the United Lutheran Church": —

"The Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, in convention assembled at New Ulm, Minn., has taken notice of an invitation issuing from the United Lutheran Church in America and proposing 'the establishment of closer relationships between them and ourselves,' and now desires that answer be made to this invitation with the following statement: —

"We fully agree as to the desirability of establishing fellowship with all Lutheran bodies of America if that can be effected without sacrifice of principle and confession. We further hold that to refuse such recognition of fellowship where there is actual agreement in all essential points would be equivalent to perpetuating a most serious offense against the truth of the Gospel.

"We feel constrained to say, however, that in our opinion such required unity does not as yet exist between the United Lutheran Church of America and our own body.

"Although the doctrinal statement in which the United Lutheran Church takes its stand on Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions is one with which, as far as it goes, no Lutheran can find fault, it nevertheless fails to take into consideration two facts: —

"1) That doctrinal issues may arise which did not exist and were not even foreseen at the time these confessions came into being.

"2) That confessional writings, even as Scripture itself, may meet with varying and often contrary interpretations.

"Since both of these possibilities have actually occurred among the various Lutheran bodies of our land, we hold that the doctrinal criterion set up in the 'Savannah Resolutions,' while stating the first essentials toward Lutheran unity, cannot take the place of an exhaustive study of the doctrinal differences that have arisen among Lutherans. We hold agreement on these questions to be an absolute prerequisite to true fellowship. 'That ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,' 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"Practical considerations which preclude any approach between the United Lutheran Church and our own body at the present time are: —

"a) A disturbing tolerance that the United Lutheran Church has shown toward doctrinal statements arising out of its own midst and patently *not* in agreement with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. We hold that this more than weakens the doctrinal platform proposed in the 'Savannah Resolutions';

"b) A treatment of the question of lodge-membership on the part of congregation-members and even pastors, which is not consistent with the principles laid down by the United Lutheran Church itself on this question in its 'Washington Declarations';

"c) A disquieting tendency toward unionism, as shown by the increasing practise of pulpit-fellowship with non-Lutherans.

"While some of these questions are often relegated to the realm of church practise, we hold that it is dangerous thus to segregate practise from doctrine. On the contrary, the practise followed by a Church in such matters is the clearest manifestation of the doctrine which it holds. Tolerance here becomes synonymous with liberalism, indifference, and denial. 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,' 1 Cor. 5, 6; Gal. 5, 9.

"These last-named conditions constitute obstacles to an early establishing of fellowship between the United Lutheran Church and our own body, which obstacles only the former itself can remove. Until this is done, we must regretfully decline this invitation.

"We ask that this statement be taken not as captious criticism or wilful faultfinding on our part, but as offered in a sincere spirit of good will and out of earnest concern that fellowship between Lutheran bodies of our land, if and when it comes about, may be based upon a true unity of the Spirit and thus be a God-pleasing union."

This declaration quite succinctly describes the barriers which now separate the U. L. C. and Synodical Conference Lutherans and which have to be removed before there can be a God-pleasing union. A.

Religion and Christianity. — *Christianity To-day* (October, 1935) reprints from the *Covenanter Witness* an article by the Rev. J. G. Vos (graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary and at present missionary in Manchuria under the auspices of the Reformed Presbyterian Church), which primarily is to show that in the two-million-dollar Gothic chapel of Princeton University "the milk-and-water gospel of Modernism is preached to 'cultured' young pagans who know as little of the real Gospel of the blood of Calvary's cross as the heathen on any mission-field." "A conservative, Bible-believing preacher is *simply never* invited to preach to the students." And as the chapel exercises are no longer distinctively Christian, so the entire university, which of course is separate from Princeton Theological Seminary, has lost its Christian character. It still professes "*religion*," but not *Christianity*. In a recent circular letter, entitled "A Statement by the President regarding the Place of Religion in the Curriculum and on the Campus," the word "religion" and "religious" occur eighteen times in its two printed pages, but "Christianity," "God," and "Christ" are not even mentioned. And at this institution, chapel attendance is required! This insistence by the Princeton authorities upon *religion* rather than upon *Christianity* leads the author to distinguish between *religion* and *Christianity*, — a somewhat unfortunate distinction, since, as the writer correctly states, Christianity is the only true religion and all so-called human religions are nothing else than *abominations*. His distinction should have been between Christianity, the true religion, and between the false human religions, which are called religions only in an improper sense. But that is only incidental. What the author writes so compellingly witnesses to the absoluteness of Christianity that it deserves notice. He says: "Christianity is different from all other religions not merely in degree, but in nature. The relation between Christianity and religion [man-made religion] is not that between a part and the whole, but that between something and its opposite. The heathen religions are of Satan, not of God. God calls them over and over in His Word "abominations"; but the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry in its report, *Rethink-*

ing Missions, would have Christian missionaries fraternize and cooperate with heathen religionists for the good of humanity, and some missionaries in the Far East are actually trying to do this very thing." An excellent testimony indeed. In pointing out the absolute character of Christianity in contrast with all man-made religions, the writer stresses the following [we quote in part only]: 1. Man-made religion says: God helps those who help themselves. Christianity says: God helps those who cannot help themselves. 2. Man-made religion consists in man's doing something for himself, or in human works, character, devotion, and merit. Christianity consists in man's doing nothing for himself, but trusting God for all. Divine grace to those who have no merit (Rom. 10, 6—10; 5, 15). 3. Man-made religion holds that man is essentially good and only needs teaching, development, or knowledge in order to become perfect (the root error of Confucianism). Christianity teaches that man is a fallen and sinful being (total depravity) and needs *redemption*, not merely enlightenment, in order to become inherently good (Rom. 5, 12; 6, 23). 4. Man-made religion teaches man's *ability* to turn to God whenever he wishes to do so (free will). Christianity teaches man's *inability* to turn to God until God first works in the soul (the will in bondage to a sinful nature; man is a free agent to act according to his nature, but he cannot originate the love of God in his heart, because his nature is evil, John 6, 44; 8, 44; 3, 3). 5. Man-made religion represents man as becoming divine, as ancient heroes, sages, etc., were worshiped after their death as gods: Buddha, Confucius, the Roman emperors; man becomes God by deification and the human race becomes divine by evolution (Acts 12, 22; Rom. 1, 23). Christianity teaches that God became human in the incarnation of the Son of God, who took to Himself human nature for the redemption of man; God became man (John 1, 1. 14). 6. Man-made religion says: Do. Christianity says: Done (John 19, 30). 7. Man-made religion says: Something in my hand I bring (salvation by works or character). Christianity says: Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling (salvation by divine grace, Rom. 11, 6). — The author closes his remarks by saying: "Enough has been said to show that the reality back of the heathen religions is Satanic and that the fallen angels, or demons, accept the worship which the heathen offer to false gods and idols. Those who ignorantly think they are worshiping Buddha, or Kuan-yin (the Chinese goddess of mercy), or the Chinese kitchen god (commonest of gods), or the sun, moon, and stars are really worshiping demons from the pit. And those more 'enlightened' modern pagans in so-called Christian lands are just as truly deceived by Satan and furthering his purposes in the world (2 Cor. 4, 3. 4)." It is understood, of course, that what the author here writes is not new to Lutheran pastors (cf. Dr. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, Vol. I); but what is here stated with so much clearness bears repetition and emphasis. Incidentally it shows what position all believing Christians take over against the naturalistic, humanistic religion of the carnal heart. J. T. M.

The Norwegian Lutheran Church and the Union Movement among Lutherans. — *Lutheraneren* (October 30), reporting that the special committee on Lutheran union appointed by Dr. Knubel resolved that joint sessions with committees of other synods should be held not later than the end of January, 1936, writes: "The committee appears to be

very hasty. It will perhaps be possible to have a few preliminary meetings, but matters of essential significance can certainly not be executed in so short a time. It is best to let the matter take its time and work itself out toward a mutual understanding." On this, *Evangelisk Luthersk Tidende* remarks editorially: "We do not know why *Lutheraneren* fears that this great union endeavor is working too fast. It gives no reasons why it should be necessary or desirable that the committee should take its time. . . . True union consists in one language, one meaning, and one mind, as God's Word demands. If *Lutheraneren* fears the committee is not approaching such a union and unity, then it must take much time and wait a long time for the great union which this movement has for its goal. *Lutheraneren*, however, has a gigantic work to perform in its own body before there can be any negotiations with other synods in the matter of union. We have on many occasions shown that the Union of 1917 is founded upon a compromise in doctrine. The Articles of Union which were agreed upon were not expressions of unity in faith and doctrine. This becomes more evident as time goes on. The troubles in the Norwegian Lutheran Church are not in matters of adiaphora. There is division [*uenighed*] regarding natural man's condition before conversion, regarding the sinner's conversion before God, regarding justification, regarding predestination, regarding the sufficient clearness of God's Word in the revelation of the way to salvation. Not to mention such matters as revivals, laymen's activities, the position of woman in the congregation, secret societies, unionism, etc. If *Lutheraneren* wishes a real and true union and unity according to God's Word, it has enough to do at home for a long time. The columns of our paper have borne sufficient testimony to this fact for many years. Also of late we called attention to the fact that the editors of *Lutheraneren* and the *Lutheran Herald* declared the Oxford Group Movement, or Buchmanism, unchristian and un-Lutheran while one of the theological professors of the Church declared it to be both Lutheran and Christian. When prominent teachers in a Church proclaim different ways of justification and salvation before God, it must cause confusion and apostasy from the faith. And *Lutheraneren* is not ignorant that there are complaints that Modernism, the denial of the whole Christian faith, is working inroads into its Church. That is a fruit of unionism, which the Union of 1917 used for its basis. *Lutheraneren* thus has reason to be afraid at this time." We would call to mind what the Apostle Paul writes to the Ephesians, chap. 4, 11—15. More yet than the Norwegian Lutheran Church the United Lutheran Church ought to secure union and unity in the sense of Scripture within its own circles before it seeks union negotiations with other synods. But may not perhaps the very discussion of Christian doctrine and practise at these intersynodical meetings foster true unity? May not God's Word assert its power for good when it is clearly and sharply confessed by those to whom unity in union is precious? Nevertheless, the points which *Tidende* here stresses are all-important.

J. T. M.

The Liberals and the Apostles' Creed. — That the Liberals are experiencing a good deal of difficulty through the adherence of many of their churches to the use of the Apostles' Creed would be clear even if they did not say so. Now and then some of them frankly speak of their

difficulties with this ancient symbol and ask the question whether they can conscientiously continue to use it. The editor of the *Christian Century*, writing on the subject "Honesty and the Apostles' Creed," has this to say: "No less staunch a churchman than Bishop Lawrence of Massachusetts has recently declared that the continued use of the Apostles' Creed should be left to the free choice of each congregation, and a great majority of the professors and students in the Episcopal theological school at Cambridge expressed agreement with this pronouncement. In Bishop Lawrence's opinion no pledge should be required from young people joining the church beyond the confession that they are disciples of Christ. The use of the Apostles' Creed as a test of membership in the church is of course quite another matter from the use of it in the liturgy of worship. In the former use it cannot be regarded as anything but a literal statement of belief, and to demand subscription to it as a condition of church-membership implies an intent on the part of the church to treat it as a literal summary of facts, and of the most important facts, in the Christian Gospel. It also implies that each item of fact or belief in the Creed is given the appropriate emphasis which it should receive in the mind of every faithful Christian. This of course falsifies the actual situation in most Protestant churches." While the editor thinks that as a statement of faith the Apostles' Creed is out of the question for our generation, he has a good word to say for its liturgical use: "The Creed has an honored place in the service of worship. The congregation stands and recites together the ancient words which have been professed by Christian multitudes through the ages. It is pretty hard to shake the Church out of this immemorial habit, and there are plausible rationalizations in defense of it. It is an esthetic exercise, not a prosaic one. This creed is a bridge which spans the centuries, thus connecting the present with the past and helping to unify history as an organic movement." Though he is willing to a certain degree to defend the use of the Apostles' Creed by a liberal modernistic congregation, he says, having balanced the arguments pro and con, that, after all, the argument for relinquishing the Apostles' Creed is more convincing than the argument for retaining it. "In Christianity the ethical, the vital, the real, must be paramount." It seems clear that the position of those who wish to retain a creed for liturgical reasons while they have abandoned the beliefs expressed therein is unworthy of intelligent people. The Modernists should let the Church know where they stand. Nothing else is compatible with honesty. A.

"To Preserve Lutheranism. — It is through the instruction in the Catechism under the tutelage of the patient pastor that future members are prepared for membership in the Church" (meaning, of course, that they are prepared for the duties of their membership). "The future of the Church can be no greater than the effort expended to educate those contemplating confirmation in doctrinal soundness. No one can gainsay the fact that as a Church we would be far more influential than we are at present had the proper doctrinal instruction been given in the past. Suffice it to say that the congregations best weathering the storm of local and national strife are those which understood the importance of indoctrination in the past. The majority of influential and thinking laymen of to-day are those who were thoroughly catechized when received into the

Church through the rite of confirmation. It is a situation peculiar to the Lutheran Church that her most stable congregations are those which have assigned an important place to the Catechism."

The article from which we are quoting goes on to discuss the new ideas and methods in catechetical instruction which are being advocated in certain quarters, has something to say about "Parochial Schools Stressed Doctrines," and concludes with this paragraph: "The solution to the present weaknesses in catechization is, after all, very simple. Our pastors have for a long time been imitating the antics of other Protestant ministers who have no time or sympathy for the Catechism and have lain down on the job. They have felt that the thoroughgoing and detailed catechetical methods common to the Swedish and German branches of our Church are hackneyed expressions and worn-out pedagogical whimsicalities. It is easy to espouse the American dislike for thoroughgoing catechization because of the extra time for leisure on the part of the pastor. It would be wise for the United Lutheran Church to send clergymen to Sweden, Germany, and other Lutheran countries to make a study of correct orthodox catechetical methods. If something of this nature is not done in the near future, our Church will in the next decade lose its denominational individuality and become submerged in the maze of that religious conglomeration known as American Protestantism. There is a disease in the Lutheran Church which must be remedied. If Lutheranism is to be salvaged from the scrapheap of non-catechetical American Protestantism, it must begin in the present if its constituency is to be indoctrinated in the future. This means hard work, a patient continuance in well-doing, and a general overhauling of the worn-out, un-Lutheran catechetical methods common in the past. This is a serious matter and must receive immediate attention. If present conditions and catechetical methods are not reformed in the near future, the older established Lutheran bodies will some day refuse to recognize our feeble attempts to remain under the banner of the Augsburg Confession." (Mr. Andrew B. Ekel, Renovo, Pa., on "Catechetical Instruction"; *Lutheran*, October 3, 1935.)

An editorial appearing in the same number states: "The article in this issue concerning more thorough catechetical instruction differs from any previously published in one respect. It presents the convictions of a layman. We know from conversations, however, that many thoughtful members of our congregations have deep admiration for pastors who insist upon thorough preparation for active membership in a Lutheran congregation. Etc." Mr. Ekel's words mean something to every Lutheran pastor.

E.

Even to This! — Under this heading the *Lutheran Sentinel* (August 28, 1935) writes: "Yes, it really has come to this that some pastors and congregations within the American Lutheran Conference do not feel, it appears, that they can have a complete social church gathering (which in the very nature of the case must be of a religious character) without a Catholic priest present and *participating* [original italics]. Two separate accounts of such unholy gatherings we read in two of our reputable Norwegian papers. The first appeared in *Skandinaven*, under the date of January 21 of this year. In this account the author, H. C. Casperson, — *Folksbladet's* editor, I believe, — chronicles an event that took place in

North Minneapolis, occasioned by the twenty-fifth anniversary of Pastor O. H. Sletten's ministry in St. Olaf's Congregation. Pastor Sletten has for years been a leader in the Lutheran Free Church, and from a pastor in this church-body, which in its official organ states that it refuses to be scared by a 'ghost from Marburg,' we might well expect even this. Now, what took place at this silver jubilee? Editor Casperson reports, with no sense of shame, it seems, that Father Dunphey, rector of the Church of Ascension (Roman Catholic), was first given the floor and that he delivered a 'very taking and appreciatory speech.' In glowing terms the Father spoke of the 'great light of truth that Dr. Sletten had been granted the privilege of holding aloft in North Minneapolis these many years.' Just think of it, a Catholic priest praising a Lutheran pastor as a beacon light of truth! We had expected that some one either from the Free Church or from the Merger Church would correct or protest this account in *Skandinaven*, but to date none has come to our notice. — About three weeks later I was handed a copy of *Minneapolis Tidende*, of January 31 of this year. This reliable paper tells of a farewell reception tendered Pastor B. E. Bergesen, who has served Zion Lutheran Church (North Minneapolis) for a number of years, having resigned to serve as a traveling evangelist in the Norwegian Church of America. The report indicates that this farewell reception was a colorful and many-colored affair. Among those participating by their presence and addresses were: Dr. O. H. Sletten of the Free Church, Pastor C. S. Thorpe, Dr. J. A. O. Stub, Drs. Stolee and Weswig of Luther Seminary (last four mentioned from the Merger Church), and Father Rakowski of the Catholic Church. The new pastor of Zion Church, the Rev. O. G. Malmin, opened and closed the meeting. All enlightened Lutherans know that the Roman Catholic Church in the Decrees of the Council of Trent has officially pronounced anathema upon *sola gratia* and *sola fide*, salvation by grace alone, salvation by faith alone. And just because of this, Luther often exclaimed: 'Pope, I will be your pestilence!' The old Romans had a striking saying: *'Vestigia terrent,'* the footsteps terrify. (This was said by the fox in Aesop's fable entitled 'The Lion and the Fox' when he saw that there were no footsteps backward from the lion's lair.) What effect must the above display of friendship have upon the souls entrusted to these pastors' spiritual care and guidance? 'If the blind lead the blind, will not both fall into the ditch?' Matt. 15, 14. How long will the lay people in the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, some of whom at least still have some Lutheran consciousness left, tolerate such 'spiritual wickedness in high places'?"

J. T. M.

"Popular Heresies Not New. — A writer in the *Presbyterian Banner* declares that recently he has read through the three volumes of Hodge's Theology with a surprising result. He says: 'The more I read Hodge, the humbler I get. There is not one of these strikingly original thoughts I have had that I do not find in the quotations of the liberals of that day and perhaps of centuries ago, quoted by Dr. Hodge in order to refute them. And besides, a lot of heresies far better than any I ever conjured up. Or did I conjure them up? Perhaps I heard them somewhere and forgot where I heard them — thought they were my own.' That very correctly states the situation. All these wonderful ideas and interpretations put

forth by our modernistic friends have recurred time and again through Christian history. Do not call yourself an 'advanced thinker' when you hold theories that were exploded centuries ago." — *Watchman-Examiner*, September 5, 1935.

Some Interpretations of the Mystic Number 666. — This is a case where the kettle and the pot are calling one another black. Writing in the *Commonweal* David Goldstein, director of the Nation-wide Catholic Campaign for Christ, complains of the mean exegesis engaged in by the Seventh-day Adventists, who maintain that the Pope's title *Vicarius Filii Dei*, when the letters having a numerical value are counted, yields the number 666, which is that of the beast in the Apocalypse. He one day came upon a young convert of Seventh-day Adventism who painted the tiara of the Pope and put on it the title just quoted. In the first place Mr. Goldstein takes the defensive and writes as follows: —

"1) *Vicarius Filii Dei* is not the name of the Pope. He is known as His Holiness Pope Pius XI. That name totals 69 and not 666 as 'the number of his [the beast's] name' must total according to chapter 13 of the Book of Revelation.

"2) *Vicarius Filii Dei* is a title, and it is not the official title of the Pope, though he is the Vicar of Christ, who is the Son of God.

"3) The official title of the Pope is *Vicarius Iesu Christi* (Vicar of Jesus Christ), as it is set down in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* and *The Catholic Dictionary*.

"4) An examination of pictures of the Pope's tiara shows that neither the title *Vicarius Filii Dei* nor any other title is inscribed thereon.

"5) The title *Vicarius Filii Dei* does not total 666 according to a proper tabulation of Roman numerical values. For instance, when an I appears before an L it does not total, as Seventh-day Adventism says, 1 and 50, or 51. It totals I minus 50, which is 49."

Next Mr. Goldstein turns the tables on his adversaries and vigorously takes the offensive. He points to the indisputable fact that the "prophetess" or "seer" of Seventh-day Adventism is Ellen Gould White. Then he argues thus: "The two L's in Ellen total 100. The U (V) equals 5, the L 50, and the D 500 in Gould; the W equals two V's, 10, and the I is one, in White. Hence the grand total is 666. Thus not the Pope, but the founder of the Seventh-day Adventist sect is the terrible creature depicted in the Book of Revelation according to their own system." What's next? A.

Episcopal Succession Advocates Given a Jolt. — It is a long story, a synopsis of which may be given as follows: A certain Mr. Ringenhjelm, who had served as a Methodist minister and for a short period attended the Augustana Theological Seminary in Rock Island, sought to be ordained by the Augustana Synod. Four times his application was considered and rejected. He was not regarded "qualified to serve successfully as a pastor" (*Lutheran Companion*). Soon thereafter Bishop Stewart of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Chicago ordained him as a deacon. Then Mr. Ringenhjelm went to Sweden, his native country, to seek church-work there. The rest of the story had best be told in the words of the Swedish Bishop of Straengaes, written in reply to inquiries by Dr. Brandelle, till recently president of the Augustana Synod.

"Ringenhjelm was here in Sweden and served as a deacon in the English church in Stockholm. The plan was that he should devote himself to the service of Americans in Stockholm who belong to the Episcopal communion. There are a number of these. The Bishop of Chicago inquired if under the circumstances I would be kind enough to ordain Ringenhjelm on his behalf. I was unable to see that there were any legitimate reasons why I should refuse him this service, inasmuch as he and the Episcopal Church desired to show me and the Swedish Church this confidence. The reasons for my act in ordaining therefore were essentially these two: I desired to render a service when the opportunity was given me, and I regarded it of a certain value to thus demonstrate an ecclesiastical fellowship which stretches beyond one's own communion. As will appear from the above, it was not a question of ordaining Ringenhjelm for service in America; such a rite would naturally have been performed by the proper authorities in America. . . . I may be permitted to add that, if the situation should arise that I should be requested by Augustana to ordain some one on behalf of the synod, I would with great joy assume such a commission."

Canon B. I. Bell (a canon is next in rank to a dean in an Episcopalian diocese) of America wrote quite bitterly about the action of Bishop Stewart of Chicago for requesting this ordination to the priesthood from a Lutheran bishop. Canon Bell now in turn is taken to task by the *Living Church* for speaking so disrespectfully of His Eminence Bishop Stewart. The *Lutheran Companion* editor relates the incident in a fully documented article. One misses, however, the *quod erat demonstrandum* at the conclusion, namely, that loyal Lutherans have no right to maintain fraternal relations with the Swedish State Church. A.

Lutheran Statistics. — Advance figures on Lutheran church-membership in America and their support of congregational and benevolent activities have been compiled for the United Stewardship Council by the Rev. Dr. Geo. Linn Kieffer, National Lutheran Council statistician. Details will appear later. Here are totals: Confirmed membership in United States and Canada, 3,127,765; per capita for congregational support, $10.24; for benevolence, $2.35. The United Lutheran Church total per capita for all support, $12.97, is approached closely by that of the Synodical Conference, $12.96, and the American Lutheran Conference, $12.17. The independent bodies and synods show an average per capita of $8.67.

N. L. C. B.

II. Ausland.

Zur Verteidigung des lutheriſchen Bekenntniſſes. Daß man ſich auch in Deutſchland, in landes- oder volkskirchlichen Kreiſen, wieder auf den Wert des lutheriſchen Bekenntniſſes beſinnt und deſſen hohe Wichtigkeit wenigſtens theoretiſch zu ſchätzen weiß, beweiſt u. a. auch ein kürzlich in der „A. E. L. K." von P. D. W. Laible, dem Herausgeber dieſer theologiſchen Zeitſchrift, unter der Überſchrift „Das lutheriſche Bekenntnis im Feuer von rechts und links" erſchienener Artikel, der, abgeſehen von einigen Ausdrücken und Sätzen, denen wir nicht beiſtimmen können, ſo viel Wahres enthält, daß er eingehenden Studiums auch in amerikaniſch-kirchlichen Kreiſen würdig iſt. Laible geht zunächſt von dem Gedanken aus, daß das

lutherische Bekenntnis mit der lutherischen Reformation und Kirche aufs innigste verquickt ist. Er schreibt: „Seit es eine lutherische Kirche gibt, hatte sie ein Bekenntnis; dies Bekenntnis war das Banner, um das sie sich scharte, die Mauer, die Gott um sie gebaut, der Jungbrunnen, aus dem sie sich immer wieder erneuerte. Es war aus dem Herzblut der Reformation geboren, mit Märtyrerblut geweiht. . . . Noch keine Schrift hat beschrieben, wieviel Kraft und Segen vom lutherischen Bekenntnis auf Volk und Kirche ausging, welche Waffenrüstung es war, erst im Kampf gegen Rom und allerlei Irrgeister, dann gegen Aufklärung und Rationalismus, gegen Monismus und Modernismus und gegen alles, was wider Gott ist." Dies herrliche, wichtige Bekenntnis der lutherischen Kirche steht nun, wie Laible weiter zeigt, im „Kreuzfeuer von rechts und links". „Die von links sprechen es offen aus, daß *seine Zeit endgültig vorüber sei*. Es sei nur noch eine Sache der Theologen, nicht der Kirche; nur Theologen hätten dafür Interesse und stritten darüber mit ‚Pastorengezänk'. Das Kirchenvolk kenne das Bekenntnis nicht mehr; es sei ihm ‚weithin fremd und zweifelhaft' geworden; es kenne *höchstens* noch den Katechismus." Demgegenüber stellt Laible die Frage, ob dieser Einwurf berechtigt sei, und antwortet u. a.: „Das Kirchenvolk soll sein Bekenntnis nicht mehr kennen? Jeden Sonntag singt es aus dem Bekenntnis heraus und betet aus dem Bekenntnis; und die Gebetbücher in den Häusern, die Erbauungsbücher, alles ist durchtränkt vom Bekenntnis. Alles, was in unserm lutherischen Kirchenvolk vorhanden ist an Glauben, Hoffen, Lieben, atmet den Geist des Bekenntnisses; davon leben unsere Christen, darauf sterben sie. Oder was ist das Kirchenlied anders als das gesungene Bekenntnis der Kirche? Wenn unser Kirchenvolk die einzelnen Sätze der Augustana und der Apologie, der Schmalkaldischen Artikel und der Konkordienformel auch nicht kennt, so ist das nicht ausschlaggebend. Auch die Bibel kennt es nicht in allen ihren Teilen; ist damit die Bibel überholt? *Ein* Bekenntnis hat aber die Gemeinde zur Hand, kennt es Satz um Satz, Buchstaben um Buchstaben, den Kleinen Katechismus. Man sage nicht spöttisch, daß sie ‚*höchstens*' den Katechismus kenne; denn dieser Katechismus ist wirklich das *Höchste*, die Krone des Bekenntnisses, ist die goldene Schatzkammer, in der alle Schätze des lutherischen Bekenntnisses beschlossen liegen. Daher ist ein Katechismusvolk auch bewußtes und gerüstetes Kirchenvolk gegen alle Sekten und Schwärmereien." — Allerdings gibt der Schreiber zu, daß in dem Satz, das Bekenntnis sei dem Volk „weithin fremd und zweifelhaft geworden", etwas Wahres liegt. Das rührt aber nicht daher, daß das Bekenntnis „veraltet", „erstarrt" geworden ist. Das behaupten zu wollen, wäre die reinste Blindheit. „Sondern allerlei kirchenfeindliche, christusfeindliche Mächte unterwühlten seit langem das Bekenntnis der Kirche, erschütterten den Glauben des Kirchenvolks, machten ihm die Bibel fremd und das Bekenntnis fremd, das auf die Bibel aufgebaut ist. Und da wundert man sich, wenn es zu einem ‚Massenabfall' in der Kirche kam, wenn heute Millionen nicht mehr wissen, was Bekenntnis, was Kirche ist. Noch andere Ursachen waren im Spiel, gottentfremdete ‚Weltanschauungen' mit innerem Aufruhr der Menschheit gegen Gott, zumeist getarnt als ‚Fortschritt', als ‚Wissenschaft', als ‚Veredlung' der Religion. Aber das will man nicht zugeben. Man sucht nach einem andern Schuldigen. Darum sei der Glaube erloschen, weil die Kirche kein lebendiges Bekenntnis mehr

hatte; ihr Bekenntnis, einst eine Lebensmacht, sei längst zum toten Buchstaben erstarrt. Der Tod sei in die Kirche eingezogen, sie habe vergessen, was sie ist, nämlich der lebendige Leib Christi." Darauf antwortet der Schreiber: „Jawohl, die Bekenntnisse sind in Buchstaben gefaßt; aber diese Buchstaben umfassen Worte, und diese Worte enthalten Leben. Wohl haben Menschen das Bekenntnis gemacht, und die Spuren der Menschenhände sind sichtbar; aber der wahre Schöpfer ist der Heilige Geist, den JEsus der Kirche verheißen hat. Darum sind auch die Bekenntnisse immer aus einem Geist und Sinn; die späteren verachteten nicht die vorigen, sondern bauten sich auf die vorigen, aber alle zusammen auf die Schrift, den untrüglichen Maßstab Gottes. Wer von ‚Erstarrung' der Bekenntnisse redet, hat nie ihres Geistes Hauch verspürt. Leben aus Gott ist Leben und bleibt Leben; nur des Menschen Augen werden starr, und dann klagt er das Leben der Erstarrung an. Nicht an den Bekenntnissen liegt es, sondern an den Augen der Menschen. Nicht der Mangel ‚zeitgemäßer' Bekenntnisse ist die Not der Kirche, sondern daß sie selbst kein Leben hat; Nervosität genug, aber kein Leben." — „Anders liegen die Dinge, wenn auch von rechts her sich der Widerspruch erhebt, von da her, wo man keinen andern Gott hat, als die Bekenntnisse lehren, keinen andern Christus [?], keinen andern Glauben [?]. Man glaubt, die evangelische deutsche Reichskirche am besten als unierte Kirche bauen zu können, nicht gerade durch die Nivellierung der Konfessionen, aber doch durch deren Abschleifung. Jede Betonung des lutherischen Bekenntnisses hindere diesen ‚Fortschritt'; daher die Pfeilschüsse gegen diese Betonung und damit auch gegen das Bekenntnis. Und nicht allein gegen das Bekenntnis, sondern gegen die lutherische Kirche selbst. Fällt das Bekenntnis, so fällt auch die Kirche. Hat aber die lutherische Kirche ihr Recht, dann auch ihre Bekenntnisse. Was habt ihr gegen diese Bekenntnisse? Sagt es uns doch! Wie oft ist diese Forderung erhoben worden! Nie wurde sie erfüllt. Wir möchten allen Ernstes bitten, nicht länger die Bibel gegen das Bekenntnis auszuspielen. Gibt es verknöcherte Bekenntnischristen, so gibt es auch verknöcherte Bibelchristen; hier Mißbrauch, da Mißbrauch. Aber nicht der Mißbrauch entscheidet, sondern der rechte Gebrauch, und das ist der, daß rechte Bekenntnischristen die Schrift über alles hochhalten, Herz und Leben danach einrichten und immer fragen: Wie steht geschrieben? So lasse man das Bekenntnis unangetastet; ja man halte um so fester dazu, je mehr die Scharen eines säkularisierten Christentums dagegen anrennen. Denn dies Bekenntnis steht auf dem heiligen Boden der Schrift, ist von Gott selbst der Kirche deutscher Reformation eingestiftet, hat sich bewährt in guten und bösen Tagen. Es ist noch zu wenig, es ‚unangetastet' zu lassen. Wir sagen mehr: Erhebt es wieder zum Panier, richtet um dieses Panier her wieder die lutherische Kirche in Deutschland auf! Ihr könnt sie auch, wenn ihr wollt, die ‚evangelische Kirche deutscher Nation' nennen; nur zurück zum Glauben der Väter, zurück zum Bekenntnis der Väter!" — Auch hierzulande ist man, selbst in lutherischen Kreisen, bekenntnismüde geworden und hat Lehrfortbildung mit neuen, der Zeit angepaßten Ausdrücken gefordert. Das hier Gesagte dürfte daher auch uns amerikanisch-lutherischen Christen von Wichtigkeit sein.

Aber, so möchten wir den Schreiber fragen, warum eine lutherische Kirche, die auf dem lutherischen Bekenntnis steht, evangelisch nennen,

da dieser Name doch so allgemein im Sinn von uniert gebraucht wird? Auch in dem Namen Lutherisch liegt ein gewaltiges Stück Bekenntnis. Was übrigens der Schreiber von den Bekenntnisopponenten von rechts her sagt, nämlich daß sie keinen andern Gott, keinen andern Christum, keinen andern Glauben lehren als den, den die Bekenntnisse lehren, trifft nicht zu. Die zahlreichen Reformierten z. B., die dem lutherischen Bekenntnis je und je opponiert haben, haben sich nie voll und ganz zu dem Christus und dem Glauben bekannt, den unsere Bekenntnisse darlegen und auf Grund der Schrift bekennen. Das hat sich von alters her gezeigt in ihrem Widerspruch gegen die lutherische Lehre von Christi Person, der Mitteilung der Eigenschaften, den Gnadenmitteln, dem heiligen Abendmahl, der Gnadenwahl usw. Laible sollte an diesem Punkt genauer reden und die Gegensätze ins klare bringen. Der unierte, reformierte Geist stand in bezug auf diese Lehren nie rechts, sondern nur links. J. T. M.

Collapse of Religion in Russia. — What Dr. Walter Van Kirk, secretary of the Department of International Justice and Good Will of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, reports on religious conditions in Russia, which country he has just toured, is sad beyond any lamentations and tears of which we are capable. We quote some of the most important statements in his report.

"The Soviet Government is the sworn enemy of religion. While in Moscow, I stood before the old Duma Building, on one side of which there is inscribed the legend 'Religion is the opiate of the people.' Every day this inscription is read and believed by thousands. . . . I spent a Sunday traveling from the Polish border to the capital city of the Communists. The calendar told me it was Sunday, but the peasants and workers seemed to be wholly unaware that this particular day was the Lord's Day. They were in the fields, pitching hay or threshing wheat. From my train window I saw hundreds of men and women at work in lumber camps and in railroad yards. As I traveled through the villages, I saw innumerable neglected churches, where once the peasants on Sunday worshiped the God of their fathers. There are, to be sure, a number of churches in Russia still open. I visited some of these churches. What I saw, however, only confirmed my impression that the U. S. S. R. is getting God-less. The worshipers were mainly old people. I saw very few young people in the churches. This to my mind is the most convincing evidence of the decadence of religion in Russia. The present youth generation in Russia is the youth generation of the Communist revolution. These youngsters have been brought up on a diet of atheism. They are strongly antireligious. They do not believe in God. They have no use for the churches. I talked with many of these young people. They laughed at me when I sought to interpret religion as something more than creeds and dogmas. They replied that they were through with God, with religion, and with the institutions of religion. One day I visited a kindergarten, where I found nearly a hundred little children. I asked these children what they thought about God, and I was politely informed by these little ones that there was no God. . . . Despite the constitutional guarantees of religious freedom the Church in Russia is persecuted in many ways. It is a matter of common knowledge that hundreds of priests have been slain, while hundreds of

others have been sent into exile. Still others have just disappeared, and God alone knows where they are or what they are doing. A worker who frequents church is discriminated against in various ways. He cannot be a member of the Communist party till he formally disavows belief in religion and in the Church. The priests are reduced to a state of beggary. All professional ecclesiastics have been disfranchised, and they are not for this reason permitted to engage in labor of any kind, nor are the pastors of the Evangelical Church permitted to propagandize their respective faiths. Of three hundred Lutheran pastors in prerevolution days only thirty remain. A little way out of Moscow I passed a forced-labor camp, where I was told a number of Lutheran pastors were working at the point of a bayonet. . . . I visited in the homes of peasants; and when I asked about religion, I was told that only the old and feeble-minded had any interest in the things of God. I happened on a Sunday to be in one of the rural villages in the wheat belt of Southeastern Russia. I wanted to go to church. I had to travel for miles in a truck since the churches in the immediate neighborhood were closed. The service was attended by a mere handful of people. I talked with the local priest, and the first question which I put to him was this: 'What is the future for religion in Russia?' And without a moment's hesitation the priest replied, 'There is no future for religion in Russia.' I asked this aged man of God whether or not any priests were being trained in Russia for the ministry. His answer was a solemn negative. . . . The offering at this particular church consisted of five pieces of black bread, four green apples, and an egg. I asked the priest what he would do when he had eaten his bread, apples, and egg, and he unblushingly told me that he would visit among the homes of the faithful and beg for food. While I was talking with the priest, the head of the local Soviet walked into the altar room unannounced and uninvited. The priest gave me a warning look, and I knew that the time for further questions had passed."

In our prayers let us not forget poor Russia. A.

The Lutheran Church in France. — Since the third Lutheran World Convention, during the past October assembled in Paris, France, the church-papers submit a good deal of information on the status of Lutheranism in that country. The following is taken from the *National Lutheran Council Bulletin:* —

"The size of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France is overwhelmingly determined by the allegiance of Alsace and Lorraine. In 1871, after those two provinces had been taken by Germany, she was so weak that the General Synod was uncertain whether to lie down in defeat or go on courageously. She decided on the latter and has given an example of devotion to her faith that should hearten the entire Church. Lutherans were the first Protestants in France to be martyred for their faith in the sixteenth century, and they have maintained a vigorous religious life throughout the centuries.

"The Church in France at present numbers about 398,000. She is divided into three groups: a) Paris, with 22 pastors and 13,000 members in 20 parishes; b) Montbeliard, with 37 parishes and 90 congregations and 35,000 members, served by 45 pastors; c) Alsace-Lorraine, with a

membership of 238,578 in 210 congregations, served by 174 pastors. The Church of Paris is constantly expanding in congregations and in works of mercy and foreign missions. She is active in mission-work in Madagascar and conducts a deaconess training-school and a health center near the city."

Lutheranism which is loyal to the Confessions of the Church is represented in Paris by our brother the Rev. F. C. Kreiss, who is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Alsace-Lorraine. A.

A Survey of Lutheranism throughout the World. — A remarkable address was delivered by Prof. Dr. Herman Sasse of Erlangen on the subject "The Present Situation of the Lutheran Church throughout the World" when the Neuendettelsau Missionary Society held its 1935 mission-festival. The address reveals such a penetrating study of conditions in the Lutheran Church that we should like to quote it in its entirety. Considerations of space compel us to limit our quotations to a few salient utterances. Speaking of Germany and condemning the union of 1817, he writes: —

"Dare an evangelical Church forget that to this prayer ["that they may all be one"] there also belongs 'Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth'? Can there be a real unity of the Church when there is no unity in the teaching of the Gospel and in the interpretation of the Sacraments, for example, in the question whether Jesus Christ, the Lord, is really, personally present in the Sacrament of the Altar according to His human and His divine nature? When we are once agreed and able to express our unity in one definite confession, then a real step toward unity of the Church will have been taken; but the unions brought about in the nineteenth century signified that it was the opinion that confessional unity was unnecessary, that it was necessary only to act as if they were united. What came out of this is evident. We shall give but one example. At a Rhenish teachers' institute the future teachers are instructed in the Lutheran as well as in the Heidelberg Catechism in order that, according to the requirements, they might give instruction either in Lutheran or Reformed religion and so that in case of a change they can go over from one confession to the other without difficulty. The training of future preachers by the majority of German theological faculties has not been much different lately. Is it surprising that our Church has lost its moral esteem among the people in most of Germany? The people certainly do not understand much theology, and they do not have to know much of it; yet they understand something about veracity and have a finer feeling for it than many an educated person. They understand more about theological honesty and veracity than many an educated theologian. . . . If our Church cannot remain a confessional Church, if it must join with other churches of different confessions in spite of the unsolved question of doctrine, then the four-hundred-year story of the Reformation is at an end in our fatherland. . . . 'A German Evangelical Church' which would surrender the unadulterated Augsburg Confession would be only a new sect, whose superfluousness would soon be shown in church history."

Concerning the Lutheran churches of America Dr. Sasse has high words of praise. "Who of us knows that in New York, Philadelphia, or

in Chicago on every Sunday more Lutheran services are held than in a large German city? Who knows that in New York there are a great many more Lutheran churches than, for example, in Berlin, that there are a great many more preachers than in a German city like Hamburg? We do not know that here. Who knows that hundreds of thousands, even a million, children in America are brought up upon the Small Catechism, not only in the German language, but also in English? . . . The fact that the Lutheran congregations and synods have held so firmly to the confession of their Church, that their theologians have withstood the temptations of syncretism, — all this cannot be explained simply by confessional obstinacy or even by a romantic conservative sentiment. Where should that have come from in the United States? The power of American Lutheranism to resist and the strength for a great development of the Church grew out of a church-forming power in substance of its confession. If the church history of the nineteenth century has recorded a defeat for German Lutheranism in general, it has chronicled victory for Lutheranism in America. The development of the Lutheran Church in the vast expanses of the North American continent in the course of a few generations is the greatest positive event in the history of our Church since the close of the orthodox period."

To the churches in the Scandinavian countries Dr. Sasse sounds a well-founded warning. "Ever since the time of the Reformation there always has existed a more or less strong exchange between German and Nordic Lutheranism, as a single glance into the hymnal and at the theological literature will reveal. Recent developments in the Church indicate that this exchange has become more and more supplemented by an ever stronger relation between the Scandinavian and the Anglican churches. Indeed, here and there it is already beginning to be endangered by this intimacy. Not Wittenberg, but Canterbury is the place which is attracting the attention of the Northern churches and their theologians. This change began with the grand church polity of Nathan Soederblom, who personally maintained the peculiarity of the Nordic Lutherans and at the same time the connection with the German Church. His death, however, closed a period of Nordic church history and opened a new one, in which the force of attraction of the Church of England is becoming more evident. The wavering and the compromising of German Lutheran theology in the decisive years of the German Church, the adulteration of German Lutheran theology with the thought and forces of Calvinism, and finally the complete collapse of the German Church in our day have hastened the process in the North. The Nordic churches are on the way from Wittenberg to Canterbury."

We merely wish to say that Dr. Sasse would be surprised if he knew to what an extent many American churches which are sailing under the flag of confessional Lutheranism are willing to fraternize with Calvinistic denominations. A.

Roman Catholic Influence in Scotland Growing. — In Scotland, overwhelmingly Protestant, Roman Catholicism has of late been making headway and accomplishing some of its objectives. There were outbreaks of ill will, accompanied by attempts at violence, when the Eucharistic Congress was held in Edinburgh and when Catholic individuals were singled

out for special honors. The inimical manifestations were rather disgraceful. That the Protestants, however, have been provoked rather tryingly is brought out in the following paragraph from the report of the correspondent in the *Christian Century:* "The grounds of grievance were well stated in the report of the Church Interests Committee to the last assembly. The committee had engaged in a careful and dispassionate survey into the workings of the 1918 Act, which had transferred the Roman Catholic schools from Church support to that of the State. The report pointed out that an additional burden had been put on taxpayers in four ways: the £. 771,000 cost of purchasing the schools already erected; the annual rent paid for buildings taken by lease; the cost of out-of-date buildings (at least £. 1,335,000); and the fact that the Roman Church had successfully demanded the erection of separate schools even in areas where there was already adequate accommodation for all children of school age." The correspondent then quotes from the report alluded to: "The Roman Catholic Church has thus been enriched to an enormous extent, both through the lifting of the burden of building and maintaining schools and through the largely increased remuneration of its staffs. In addition, it may be mentioned that a considerable number of the teachers are in religious orders, and their salaries, by the terms of their vows, therefore go into the coffers of the Church." This explains, though, of course, it does not excuse, the drastic manifestation of anti-Catholic feeling on the part of many Protestants in Scotland. A.

Calendar Trouble in Greece. — Just as though this poor world had not sufficient conflicts and squabbles to torment it, some people in Greece are fomenting strife on the question whether the old calendar, known as the Julian, or the new, usually called the Gregorian, should be followed. The former, we are told, is now about fourteen days behind the sun and for that reason ought to be regarded as antiquated. However, there are people in Greece who are not willing to take this practical or pragmatic point of view. The *Living Church* informs us that two bishops in Greece "who had once agreed with the rest of the synod to use the revised or Gregorian calendar, like the rest of Christendom, refused to do so later and have fallen back on the use of the old Julian calendar." These people now "have started an open schism by consecrating a rival hierarchy of the 'Orthodox Old Calendarian Rite.' They have already consecrated four bishops of this rite and propose to lay hands on three more, making nine recusants in all." The ultra-conservatives, so the article on which we draw says, have been permitted the use of the old calendar for themselves, but these "Paleohemerologists" insist that, if the calendar is changed, this is identical with apostasy, and they will oppose it with all their might. The controversy has its semihumorous aspect, inasmuch as some of these standpatters tell their people "that a large number of children will not be able to have any birthdays this year, for the omission of fourteen days from the calendar would have that effect inevitably." Shall we laugh or weep? A.

Book Review. — Literatur.

Verdeutſchung der Evangelien und ſonſtiger Teile des Neuen Teſtaments, von den erſten Anfängen bis Luther. Herausgegeben in Gemeinſchaft mit Gerhard Bruchmann, Fritz Jülicher und Willy Lüdtke von Hans Vollmer. Hamburg. 1935. Akademiſche Verlagsgeſellſchaft Athenaion, Potsdam. 293 Seiten 6½×9½. Mit einer Beigabe: *Curiosa Biblica.* Preis: RM. 24.

Zu den in früheren Jahrgängen dieſer Zeitſchrift beſprochenen Monographien dieſer Serie geſellt ſich dieſer Band in durchaus würdiger und adäquater Weiſe; ja, es will uns ſcheinen, daß die ganze Anlage und Darſtellung in dieſem Bande die früheren noch faſt übertrifft. Die Pſalmenüberſetzung iſt bereits behandelt und die pauliniſchen Briefe zum Teil, und der vorliegende Band bietet nun ausgewählte Perikopenabſchnitte aus dem Neuen Teſtament mit Proben von Überſetzungen, von der Vulgata an, durch die Jahrhunderte hindurch bis auf die Wormſer und Züricher Bibel. Dieſe Tabellen füllen allein 209 Seiten, mit den folgenden Texten: Luk. 2, 1—14; Joh. 2, 1—11; Matth. 2, 1—12; 9, 1—8; Joh. 5, 1—9; Apoſt. 2, 1—11; Jak. 3, 14—18; 1 Petr. 4, 12—14; Apok. 14, 1—5. Den Anhang des Bandes bildet ein von drei Bildtafeln begleiteter Beitrag zur Kunſtgeſchichte, in dem bisher unbekanntes Material aus der Fülle der mittelalterlichen Illuſtrationen der Zehn Gebote ordnend und ſichtend vorgelegt wird. Jeder Theolog, der ſich noch einigermaßen intenſiv mit der deutſchen Bibel befaßt, wird dieſe Studien berückſichtigen müſſen. P. E. Kretzmann.

The Book of Revelation. A series of outline studies in the Apocalypse by *James H. McConkey.* Silver Publishing Society, Bessemer Building, Pittsburgh, Pa. 96 pages, 4×6½.

A short commentary on Revelation based upon the theory that this book is simply an unfolding of the 24th chapter of Matthew. The writer assumes that the Seventh Trumpet is identical with the Seven Vials and that the Seventh Seal is identical with the Seven Trumpets. He gets into trouble with this scheme when chapters 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18 appear detached from the system just outlined and must be treated as "insets." The author is a believer in a literal millennium in which (literally) a small child will lead the wild beasts. The entire Apocalypse is made to refer to the events immediately preceding the Second Advent.

Th. Graebner.

Jesus and the Word. By *D. Rudolf Bultmann,* University of Marburg. Translated by *Louise Pettibone Smith* and *Erminie Huntress,* Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass. 1934. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, London. 226 pages, 5×7½. Price, $2.00.

When this book appeared in Germany, it bore the title *Jesus.* Since Professor Bultmann's aim is not so much to tell the story of Jesus' life as to give the reader an understanding of the message of our Lord, the American translators, who, as far as we can judge, did their work well, were justified in changing the title. The author is a New Testament scholar and a Barthian. In the former capacity he belongs to the school which sponsors the so-called *formgeschichtliche Methode* of Gospel criti-

cism. His book *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, the second edition of which appeared in 1931, is one of the chief works published by the exponents of this type of Gospel-study. Whoever has read the book just mentioned will not be surprised when he finds the author in the present work, though admitting the historicity of Jesus, denying or questioning the genuineness of numerous utterances attributed to Christ by the apostles, utterances on whose authenticity textual criticism does not throw a shadow of doubt. Hence the gospels are to him not only not infallible, but not even reliable human documents, and in his view it is only through careful sifting and the application of severe, sharp-cutting, critical canons that one can with some degree of certainty arrive at what Jesus actually said. It is with a sad heart that we report such an outrageous treatment of God's holy Word.

Strange to say, as a Barthian the author belongs to a school which in its teaching gives much prominence to the concept "Word of God." In the book before us, it is true, this feature is not very evident. What are the chief elements in the message of Jesus according to Professor Bultmann? The imminence of the Kingdom is proclaimed. A decision for adherence to the Kingdom is demanded, which decision is the same as repentance. The Kingdom can simply be described as eschatological deliverance. It must be admitted, says Professor Bultmann, that Jesus had wrong notions about the Last Day and the Judgment, sharing the erroneous conceptions of His contemporaries. But He did not accept the futilities contained in the apocalyptic literature of the age, for instance, in 4 Ezra. But Jesus expected the Jewish nation to receive special honors in the new era. What is important, however, is not the "mythological" coloring of His terminology, but the core of His teaching: the call for a decision in view of the coming of the Kingdom. As for man, he is able to make the right choice when he has to decide whether to belong to the Kingdom or not. — Jesus accepted the Old Testament Scriptures, but in preaching the will of God, which has to be obeyed, He differentiates in the Scriptures between what is absolutely binding and what is less mandatory. He therefore does not view the Scriptures as a rule for us in every point. God intends men themselves to see what He requires of them, what in the Scriptures must be followed and what may be disregarded. Realizing that he is confronted with the necessity of a decision, a person will be able to determine which way his choice should fall. It is misunderstanding Jesus to think that He insists on our pauperizing ourselves, on celibacy, and fasting. — Like the Old Testament, Jesus insists on love toward the neighbor, not specifying at length what this implies, since everybody knows it. The view of Schweitzer and others that Jesus taught an interim-ethic, an ethic which was to obtain merely for what He erroneously supposed to be a short period, the time between the promulgation of the message and the coming of the Judgment, is rejected by our author. Speaking of the conception of God which Jesus proclaimed, Professor Bultmann holds that God was to Jesus both distant and close at hand, present and future — a matter quite self-evident to every Bible Christian. He concedes that Jesus accepted miracles and the efficacy of prayer, but he denies that faith meant to Jesus what it meant to Paul and John, a belief in the message of redemption. He af-

firms that Jesus by faith signified merely the trust, exhibited in particular moments of need, that God is almighty and will help. On the question of sin Jesus taught, according to Professor Bultmann, that man is entirely helpless, a condemned creature, and has to rely on the pardon of God. That Jesus' sacrifice is the foundation of the forgiveness of God is something that Jesus Himself did not teach, says Professor Bultmann, thus wounding the Christian religion in its very heart. — We have endeavored to give the reader some idea of what this Barthian negative critic teaches. Quite sympathetically we may read those sections of the book in which a sickly sentimentalism, the tenets of a self-satisfied, easy-going religious Liberalism, and the false humanism, which glorifies the creature at the expense of the Creator, are branded as not representing the teachings of Christ. But on the whole its views are by the deepest chasm imaginable separated from Scriptural truth. For those who wish to acquaint themselves a little with the lines of thought and the terminology of Barthianism it may prove a welcome aid. W. Arndt.

Die Kirche: ihr Amt, ihr Regiment. Grundlegende Sätze mit durchgehender Bezugnahme auf die Symbolischen Bücher der lutherischen Kirche. Von Theodosius Harnack, weiland Doktor und ordentlichem Professor der Theologie in Erlangen. Nürnberg, 1862. Anastatischer Nachdruck. 1934. C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh. 90 Seiten. Preis: M. 1.50.

Im Geleitwort zur Neuherausgabe dieser Schrift heißt es: „Wenn dies theologische Schriftchen nach siebzig Jahren aufs neue erscheint, so muß es schon den Anspruch erheben, uns in unsern Kämpfen und Mühen um die Kirche wichtige Dienste zu leisten." Und wirklich hat Th. Harnack, einer der wenigen, die zu seiner Zeit nachdrücklich auf Luther hinwiesen, der auch gegen manche Abweichung vom lutherischen Bekenntnis kräftig Zeugnis ablegte, in diesem Büchlein auch unserer Zeit manches zu sagen. Es herrscht noch immer Unklarheit in der Lehre von der Kirche. Man hat noch nicht allerseits gelernt, daß die Kirche nichts anderes ist als die Gemeinde der wahrhaft Gläubigen. Was die gegenwärtigen kirchlichen Kämpfe und Wirren in Deutschland betrifft, so sollten die Deutschen, Volk und Führer, sich von Harnack sagen lassen, daß „Hierarchismus und Autokratismus, letzterer als der cäsareopapistische oder der demokratische, diejenigen Formen der Verfassung sind, die dem Wesen der reformatorischen Kirche widerstreben", S. 79, daß „eine solche Vermischung von Kirche und Welt, bei welcher sich der Wille der unterschiedslosen Masse der Namenchristen . . . zur Norm in der Kirche aufwirft", S. 31, und „jede Mittlerschaft der Kirche zu verwerfen ist, bei der sie, statt Dienerin Christi zu bleiben, sich zu seiner autonomen Stellvertreterin und zur Herrin über die Gläubigen aufwirft", S. 25. Vor allen Dingen sollte das jetzige Geschlecht, Kirchenvolk und Kirchenführer, sich zu Herzen nehmen, was Harnack über „die prinzipielle Verwirrung des Unionismus in seinen verschiedenen Stufen" (S. 3) zu sagen hat. Harnack will nichts davon wissen, daß alle Kirchen gleichberechtigt seien, daß die verschiedenen Konfessionen sich gegenseitig ergänzen, daß Gott die Verschiedenartigkeit derselben gewollt habe, daß sie also als Schwestern nebeneinander stehen (Denominationalismus) oder in ihrer Verschiedenheit sich zu einer Kirche zusammentun sollen (ausgewachsener Unionismus). Harnack protestiert gegen C. Stanges Satz: „Die Mannigfaltigkeit und Eigenart der Konfessionen hat auch im Zusammenhang der christlichen Kirche ihr Recht." (Allgemeine Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung, 18. Juli

1930.) Er ſagt: „Die äußere Einheit iſt gebrochen, weil die innere fehlt. Die Sünde hat die Trennung in Konfeſſionen verſchuldet. . . . Die Konfeſſionen ſind getrennt, nicht weil ſie ein verſchiedenes Kirchentum oder je ein anderes donum haben, ſondern weil ſie im Weſen, im πνεῦμα, differieren", S. 82 f. Und den Lutheranern ſagt er: „Die lutheriſche Kirche kann von ihrem Glauben und ihrem Bekenntnis nichts aufgeben; ohne ihren apoſtoliſchen Charakter aufzugeben und auf ihren ökumeniſchen Beruf zu verzichten. Der Unionismus will nicht die zentrale Stellung des lutheriſchen Glaubens und Bekenntniſſes zugeſtehen und leugnet, daß ſie die Kirche des ſchriftgemäßen Bekenntniſſes iſt." (S. 88.) Gewiß, wir Lutheraner wollen Einheit und Einigkeit; wir wollen Union. Wie kann ſie erreicht werden? „Die lutheriſche Kirche hat in ſolchem Kampfe die heilige Pflicht, . . . poſitiv die rechte Union an ihrem Teil ermöglichen zu helfen. Sie hat zu dem Ende nicht ein Neues zu ſchaffen; . . . ſie hat nur das ihr inwohnende Prinzip und die Subſtanz ihres Glaubens immer treuer, wahrer und voller durchzuführen." (S. 90.) „Sie trägt das wahrhaft katholiſche Einheitsband der Kirche in ſich." (S. 84.) Mögen ſolche Sätze in der Kirche Deutſchlands und Amerikas die weiteſte Verbreitung finden!

Es findet ſich nun aber auch, wie in der Theologie Harnacks überhaupt, ſo auch in ſeiner Lehre von der Kirche und dem Kirchenregiment manches Verkehrte. Das ſtimmt nicht mit dem lutheriſchen Bekenntnis, daß „die Kirche ſichtbar-unſichtbarer Natur iſt", daß „mithin der weſentlichen Kirche Sichtbarkeit zukommt, nicht bloß akzeſſoriſch, ſondern notwendig, nicht nur folgeweiſe, ſondern urſprünglich" (S. 16), daß „die weſentliche Kirche, wie ſie Artikel VII der Auguſtana beſchreibt, nicht bloß eine unſichtbare iſt" (S. 37). Er hat nicht das Bekenntnis für ſich, wenn er S. 71 den „grundſätzlichen Independentismus — in der Form der ſouveränen Gemeinde" verwirft. Und es iſt durchaus unlutheriſch, durchaus wider die Schrift, wenn er leugnet, daß die Autorität des Kirchenregiments „eine bloß menſchlich begründete, aus dem Willen der Gemeinde ſtammende" iſt, ſondern behauptet, daß „die Kirche damit den Boden der Ordnung und des vierten Gebots betritt", daß ſie „als verfaßte eine zu Recht beſtehende, kirchliche Obrigkeit hat, der ſie um Gottes willen Gehorſam ſchuldig iſt, ſoweit und ſo lange, als dieſelbe nach dem Willen Gottes regiert", das heißt, nichts „contra evangelium" feſtſetzt. (S. 80 f.) Das iſt der alte, noch heute kräftige Irrtum, daß die kirchliche Obrigkeit in Mitteldingen zu befehlen habe, daß, wie die Eltern und die Obrigkeit, ſo auch das Kirchenregiment geſetzgebende Autorität habe. In dieſer von Harnack vertretenen Anſicht, daß dem Kirchenregiment in Sachen, die Gott freigelaſſen hat, um des Gewiſſens und Gottes willen Gehorſam ſchuldig ſei, liegen die Wurzeln des von Harnack in dieſer Schrift ſcharf bekämpften Romanismus. Und er verficht ſeinen Satz, trotzdem er ſelber erklärt: „Es liegt klar am Tage, daß unſer Bekenntnis dem Kirchenregiment nur ein ius humanum vindiziert." (S. 72. 80.) Th. Engelder.

King of the Jews. By *Mary Borden.* Little, Brown & Co., Boston. 306 pages, 5½×8. With bibliography. Price, $2.50.

Mary Borden (Spear), born in Chicago, is the wife of Brigadier General E. L. Spear, who is now living in London and is devoting his time to British politics as a Member of Parliament. Mother of four children, she, during the World War, successfully managed a field hospital for the French army, receiving in due time as a just reward a number of distinguished

French and British service and war medals (Legion of Honor; Croix de Guerre with star and palm; the Gilt Medal of Service de Santé; two other British war medals). Already before the war she had visited Palestine, studying zealously, yet critically the holy places where Christ lived, performed His Messianic ministry, and died. A second visit in the Holy Land, after the war, prompted her to add to her twelve previous, all rather large and well-received volumes, this present one. The purpose of her new project was to picture the Man Jesus so purely human that her readers could visualize Him as a real human being, divested of all supernatural elements, yet at the same time in such a manner that the later Pauline (Petrine-Johannine) Christological doctrine, a gradual development of course, could reasonably be explained. Setting about her task, Mrs. Spear studied every available source and then, largely on the basis of the four gospels, by a novel selective process, wrote her *King of the Jews*, vividly and ingeniously (from the viewpoint of imaginative reason), but with the result that her *King of the Jews* is not the divine-human Christ of the New Testament, but a Mary Borden fiction, a *homo deus factus*, especially through the efforts of Mary of Magdala, "an illiterate woman," "brought up in a brothel," "used by men as an animal," "a dancing girl." "famed for her devilish beauty," "soliciting men in the bazaars," etc. (We cite this to show what she does with Mary Magdalene; she does the same thing with Jesus to develop Him into a King of the Jews.) The book is skilfully written, but it is just one more pernicious volume on the pseudo-religious book market that will keep unwary readers from seeing the divine-human Redeemer of the world as God Himself pictures Him in His Word, against which therefore a word of warning is in place. To this end this review has been written. J. T. Mueller.

Die Klassiker der Religion. Herausgegeben von Prof. Lic. theol. Gustav Pfannmüller. Zehnter und elfter Band: „Luther in Worten aus seinen Werken." Von Martin Rade. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen. XL und 402 Seiten 6×7½. Preis: In Pappband gebunden, M. 4.

Vor langer Zeit erschien ein vierbändiges Werk, das sich nicht selten in den Bibliotheken unserer älteren Pastoren und Professoren fand, unter dem Titel „Geist aus Luthers Schriften", eine „Lutherkonkordanz", wie es auch vielfach genannt wurde. Von Rationalisten herausgegeben, bot es unter Stichworten in alphabetischer Reihenfolge Lutheraussprüche über die betreffenden Gegenstände dar. Es vermittelte oft Bekanntschaft mit Luthers Gedanken und Worten und wurde auch ebenso oft Anlaß, weiter in Luthers vollständigen Schriften nachzulesen. Ich habe mehr als einen unserer theologisch weiterarbeitenden Pastoren getroffen, die große Stücke auf dieses Werk hielten: Joseph Schmidt, H. Lemke und andere. An dieses Werk dachte ich, als ich das obengenannte, schon vor einer Reihe von Jahren ausgegangene Werk mir näher ansah. Der Herausgeber ist ein bekannter liberaler Theolog der Gegenwart, und seiner Theologie kann man in keiner Weise folgen; aber er hat viel Luther gelesen, auch eine Lutherbiographie geschrieben, und eine Frucht seines Lutherstudiums ist das vorliegende Werk, das der für gebildete Leser bestimmten Bücherreihe „Die Klassiker der Religion" von Pfannmüller eingereiht ist. Rade bemerkt in der Vorrede: „Es ist doch schon lange her, daß Luther lebte und schrieb. Kein Wunder, daß seine Art uns fremd geworden ist, in der Form

und oft auch in der Sache. Man darf sagen, er ist unter den großen Unbekannten, die wie die Sterne am Himmel unserer Geisteswelt leuchten, einer der größten — und unbekanntesten. Gewiß, wer kennt und nennt ihn nicht? Wer weiß nicht manches von ihm? Aber ihn selbst?" (S. IX.) Ein wahres Wort, das auch in Amerika gilt, auch in unserer Synode. Wir nennen uns nach Luther, wir rühmen ihn, wir feiern sein Gedächtnis; aber wer liest ihn, wer studiert ihn? Wir haben unsere große Lutherausgabe, von der auch einzelne Bände abgegeben werden; wir haben die vielen, wirklich schönen kleineren Ausgaben, die in unsern Zeitschriften von Zeit zu Zeit angezeigt werden; wir haben die gute englische Holman oder Philadelphia Edition, wenn sie auch hauptsächlich nur reformationshistorische Schriften bringt und die wichtigen und trefflichen exegetischen und homiletischen Schriften Luthers übergeht; wir haben Luthers gewaltigste Streitschrift, *De Servo Arbitrio*, und seinen unvergänglichen ausführlichen Kommentar zum Galaterbrief in guten, billigen englischen Separatausgaben. Aber wo finden sie sich in Pfarrersbibliotheken und werden gelesen statt der minderwertigen, oft verkehrten, bedenklichen und jämmerlichen reformierten Literatur? Aus Anlaß der im vorigen Jahrgang dieser Zeitschrift erschienenen „Kleinen Studien aus dem Galaterbrief" schrieb uns ein älterer Pastor einer Großstadtgemeinde, der immer theologisch weiterarbeitet, daß diese Artikel ihn „bewogen haben, Luthers großen Kommentar ordentlich zu studieren. ‚Voila un homme!' Offenbar habe ich Luther bis jetzt noch gar nicht recht gekannt". Aber mehr als einmal sind mir auch Artikel und Schriften zu Gesicht gekommen aus lutherischen Kreisen, auch aus unsern Kreisen, in denen die Verfasser vor Verkehrtheiten, ja Schwärmereien bewahrt geblieben wären, wenn sie sich durch Luther hätten aus der Schrift belehren lassen. Wie Luther auch in den die Welt jetzt bewegenden sozialen, politischen und ökonomischen Fragen so Vernünftiges und Richtiges zu sagen hat, kann dem Leser so nebenbei D. Engelders Artikel in der letzten Nummer dieser Zeitschrift „Kirche, Staat, Obrigkeit, Volk, Rasse, Familie — und Gottes Wort" sagen. — Dieser Unkenntnis Luthers will der Herausgeber des vorliegenden Werkes entgegentreten, indem er nach einer vierzig Seiten langen Einleitung lauter Lutherworte darbietet, und zwar teils in geschichtlicher, teils in sachlicher Anordnung. Und darin besteht der Wert dieses Buches. Ähnlich wie in der obengenannten Lutherkonkordanz finden wir als Teile des Buches unter andern folgende: Der rechtfertigende Glaube; Um die wahre Kirche; Gott und Christus; vom Worte Gottes; Taufe und Abendmahl; Bergpredigt; Von weltlichen Ordnungen (und dieses Kapitel zerfällt in: Ehe und Hausstand; Schule und Wissenschaft; Handel und Wandel; Obrigkeit und Wehrstand; Vom Beruf); Gebet, Tod und ewiges Leben. Ich greife das letzte Kapitel heraus. Da steht zuerst — das Werk ist eben für gebildete Laien beabsichtigt — der Morgen- und Abendsegen aus dem Kleinen Katechismus, dann ein Wort „Gott sieht und hört uns" aus der Kirchenpostille, eine Ausführung über die zweite Bitte aus Luthers „Eine einfältige Weise zu beten", über die vierte Bitte aus dem Großen Katechismus, Luthers Gebet auf dem Reichstag zu Worms, wie einer Luther beten hörte (Veit Dietrich in einem Briefe an Melanchthon), ein Stoßgebet, ein Wort über Erhörung aus den Tischreden und Luthers Erklärung des Amen. Das Kapitel über Tod und ewiges Leben hat folgende Stichworte: Todesangst und Todestrotz; Darf man vor ansteckenden Krankheiten fliehen?; Der Tod eine Erlösung; Vom Trauern über die Toten; Der Tod ein Schlaf; Vom nahen Jüngsten Tage; Ewige Vollendung; und den Schluß macht Luthers letzte Aufzeichnung zwei Tage vor seinem Tode und sein einzig schönes Sterbelied „Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' dahin".

Beim Durchblättern dieſes Buches blieb ich immer hängen, wie es eben einem geht, wenn man Luther lieſt. Man kann nicht von ihm loskommen. Und in ſeinen Werken findet man dann noch ſchönere Worte, als hier mitgeteilt ſind.

L. Fürbringer.

Lutheran Faith and Life. By *M. Reu, D. D.* The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O. 160 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, $1.00. Order through Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This book is intended to serve as a manual for the instruction of adult classes. It combines in what seems to the reviewer a very happy manner the Bible histories and the truths of the Catechism and brings out in a manner at once clear and perfectly natural the doctrine of the Trinity as one of the basic truths of the Bible. "To offer a comprehensive view of the history of our salvation is the purpose of the first twelve chapters of this book. The second half of the book offers an introduction into "faith and life as it should normally grow out of this revelation of God in sacred history; put, however, not in the terminology of dogmatics, but in that of the Catechism and in a form that will be easily intelligible and at the same time will appeal to the heart," says the author in his preface. We believe that the author has successfully carried out his plan.

The author states that he does not use dogmatical terminology. That does not mean that he neglects thoroughness of indoctrination. As far as we have read the book, his insistence on thorough indoctrination is apparent everywhere. A sample may show his style and at the same time offer an opportunity for a few remarks. On page 92 we read: "By means of such good news" (the Gospel) "He seeks to engender *faith*, justifying and saving faith, within us. We call this faith a justifying and saving faith. To rely on the omnipotence and goodness of God is also faith; but such faith cannot save the sinner from the wrath of the Almighty. When the Law, by uncovering sin, instils in the heart of man terror over his own corruption and God's certain Judgment, neither the power nor the goodness of God can offer comfort. While God is, beyond doubt, almighty and good, He is also holy and must therefore abhor, reprove, and condemn sin. Under such circumstances only He can help who has taken our sins upon Himself as His own, has suffered the penalty and satisfied the wrath of God. That One is Jesus Christ. All this He did for us by His sufferings, death, and resurrection. Therefore the only justifying and saving faith is the faith which trusts firmly that Jesus Christ has borne the penalty for our sins and has transformed the relation of wrath between God and us into a relation of peace and good will." Very properly the author teaches the distinction between faith in God's power and goodness and saving faith. In his definition of justifying faith we should rather have the last words read: "and has transformed God's relation of wrath toward us into a relation of grace and peace toward us." Without Christ's work of redemption the relation of wrath between God and man is a mutual one. On God's part this relation of wrath toward man is through Christ's redemptive work changed into a relation of peace and good will. On man's part his relation of wrath toward God remains unaffected by Christ's redemptive work; that relation of man's hatred toward God is changed only by faith in the atoning work of Christ. The author's words may be interpreted in

a manner which he would most assuredly not sanction, that the relation both of wrath and of peace and good will had been mutual even prior to conversion. One need but to read his remarks on the nature and punishment of sin, page 14, and the propagation of sin, page 17, to be convinced that this was not the meaning of the author. THEO. LAETSCH.

Beauty for Ashes and Other Poems. By *W. G. Polack.* 56 pages, 4×7¼. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. Price, 40 cts. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This appealing little booklet contains some genuine lyrical verse, and it is mentioned here because twenty-seven of its forty-seven poems are of the religious variety, that is, sacred lyrics. There is much simple beauty in these verses, especially those connected with the festivals of the Church, and the lover of poetry will not only enjoy the reading of this booklet, but will most likely receive not a little edification from the study of many of its offerings. P. E. KRETZMANN.

Report of the Eighteenth Regular Convention of the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Synod Book Co., Bethany College, Mankato, Minn. 85 pages, 6×9¼. Price, 30 cts.

This report contains a very comprehensive survey and account of the work being done by our Norwegian brethren in their 65 parishes, with approximately 8,000 souls, the reports of the Board of Regents of Bethany College and of the Home Mission Board being particularly valuable for the proper understanding of the work done. Three papers were read before the convention: *Det evige liv* (On Eternal Life), by Pastor John Hendricks; "Christian Education" (conclusion), by Superintendent P. T. Buszin of the Northern Illinois District of the Missouri Synod; and "The Christian's Earthly Pilgrimage," by Pastor C. J. Quill, all of which are truly instructive and edifying. P. E. KRETZMANN.

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